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THE AWARD-WINNING INDEPENDENT: EDITOR OF THE YEAR, CORRESPONDENT OF THE YEAR

THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,871

TUESDAY 16 MARCH 1999

(1RS0p) 45p

CHEL TENHAM

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE FESTIVAL SPORT P24-25

CHARLIE WHELAN: HOW TO WOO THE TORY PRESS

REVIEW P12

A mother murdered in cold blood to sabotage the hopes of peace

THE INITIAL nightmare vision was bad enough yesterday: a female solicitor, the mother of three young children, having her legs blown off, being cut free by firemen from the ruins of her car, then dying in hospital, in pain and in blood.

Then came the next nightmare: that the assassination, an act carried out both in cold blood and in great hatred, might sabotage all the hopes for peace and political progress.

This was plainly its aim, at a time when most key Northern Ireland politicians were in Washington gearing up for a negotiating session later this month aimed at breaking the deadlock on decommissioning.

Those who planted the bomb that took Rosemary Nelson's life clearly wished both to affect the future, by derailing the peace process, and to punish her. In recent years she had acted not just as an ordinary defence solicitor, but as a champion of the beleaguered Catholics of Portadown, Co Armagh.

The attack came at lunch-time yesterday in Lurgan, not far from Portadown. The booby trap, which is assumed to be the work of loyalists, detonated as the solicitor drove her BMW car away from her home at Ashford Grange. The bomb went off as she approached a junction, possibly activated as she applied the brakes. One of the firemen who was at the scene said they found Mrs Nelson with "horrendous" injuries. She was cut free and taken to the intensive-care unit of a nearby hospital, where she died at 3.10pm. Her eight-year-old daughter, Sarah, was at school not far from the scene of the explosion, while her two sons were abroad skiing.

Mrs Nelson was unusual among Northern Ireland solicitors in that she went beyond the normal run of court work carried out for individual clients. She went on television to criticise both loyalist organisations and the security forces. She was particularly critical of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, which, she alleged, colluded with extreme loyalists and paid less than due regard to the rights of nationalists.

Within hours of her death

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent



Nelson: Assassinated

this theme had been taken up by local nationalists, who made it clear that they blamed not just loyalists but also the security forces for her killing.

Graffiti appeared in Lurgan proclaiming "Rosemary Nelson - the people's voice - murdered by the RUC/RIR", a reference to the locally recruited section of the army, the Royal Irish Regiment. Around 300 people carrying black flags and placards calling for the RUC's disbandment marched to Lurgan RUC station, where they staged a largely silent protest.

They pressed close to the spot where in July 1997 the IRA killed two RUC constables, John Graham and David Johnston. When a leading local republican, Colin Duffy, was charged with their murders, Mrs Nelson mounted a spirited defence, in the courtroom and in the media, and the charges were dropped.

A year ago a United Nations report documented Mrs Nelson's allegations that she had been the target of death threats. She also accused an RUC officer of spitting in her face and calling her a "Fenian" sympathiser, and another of striking her on the head with a riot shield during a street confrontation.

The Graham and Johnston killings caused Tony Blair publicly to question the worth of the peace process. They also raised the temperature in the run-up to the annual July Drumcree marching dispute. Rosemary Nelson's death seems bound to have a similar effect. With



Officers sealing off the area around the wreckage of the car that blew up as Rosemary Nelson drove in Lurgan, Co Armagh, yesterday

Alan Lewis

Drumcree only months away, no agreed formula has emerged to avoid a repeat of the highly damaging episodes which annually sour community relations. Although some have been hopeful that progress in averting another confrontation could be made, her death will worsen the atmosphere and add to the

huge repository of mistrust. Last night, nationalist anger spilled on to the streets of Lurgan as crowds of youths attacked the RUC and Army near Mrs Nelson's bombed-out car, and petrol bombs and stones were thrown on the nationalist Kilwilkee estate. There were signs that with

justice, many felt sometimes the voice in the wilderness.

From Washington, the First Minister designate, Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble, said he was horrified by the killing. He called on loyalists "to realise that there is no point whatsoever in violence". The crusader, page 2

Dolores Kelly, the nationalist deputy mayor of Craigavon, who went to school with Rosemary Nelson, said: "She was very much respected and was seen as a heroine in the local community... She was often the voice of

EU fraud and mismanagement are 'out of control', says report

THE EUROPEAN Commission was hit by a catalogue of criticism last night as a report into fraud slated Edith Cresson, commissioner for education and training, and accused Jacques Santer, Commission president, of allowing events to run "out of control".

The report found cases where "commissioners or the Commission as a whole bear responsibility for instances of fraud, irregularities or mismanagement" but said they had not personally benefited.

The findings, the most damning verdict delivered on Brussels, find Ms Cresson, a former French prime minister, guilty of "irregularities" and of staying silent over irregularities in the 1400m Leonardo education project even though she

BY STEPHEN CASTLE
AND KATHERINE BUTLER
in Brussels
AND ANDREW GRICE

was "in full possession of the facts". They also attacked the fundamentals of the institution itself.

As the Commission executive met to discuss the report, MEPs called for the resignation of Ms Cresson and Mr Santer. Britain suggested that heads should roll. "It is clear the Commission needs to put its house in order," Downing Street said. "The Commission has made a start but a lot more needs to be done." Asked whether Mr Santer and Ms Cresson should resign, Number 10 said it was up to those criticised to "consider their posi-



Cresson: The chief target

tions carefully." Ms Cresson has emerged as the report's chief target. She was criticised over the appointment of a friend, the dentist René Berthelot, to the position of scientific adviser.

His appointment was "manifestly irregular", the five-strong inquiry argued, citing his frequent paid missions to his home town on supposed commission business as evidence of the "fictitious nature of the scientific advice he was supposed to be giving".

On Ms Cresson's handling of the Leonardo exchange project, the document says she "bears further serious responsibility for having failed, though in full possession of the facts, to inform the president of the Commission of the problems of implementing Leonardo One".

That meant decisions were being taken in the European Parliament on future funding of the project without crucial information being imparted. More broadly, the findings

question the whole operation of the Commission. The report says "protestations of ignorance on the part of commissioners concerning problems that were often common knowledge in the services, even up to the highest official levels, are tantamount to the admission of the loss of control by the political authorities over the administration that they are supposedly running".

Monika Wulf-Mathies, commissioner for regional aid, was also attacked for nepotism. Others were cleared, including Joao de Deus Pinheiro, whose brother-in-law was appointed chef de cabinet, a senior post in the private office.

Fat cats share cream, page 4
Leading article, Review, page 3



FI SK WINS TOP AWARD

ROBERT FISK, The Independent's Middle East Correspondent, yesterday won the London Press Club's prestigious Edgar Wallace Award for outstanding reporting. The judges said: "If there's a black spot in the world, there's a strong chance Fisk will be there. The Independent is now one of Britain's best newspapers and Robert Fisk is one of its best reporters." The award comes when the paper's circulation shows a year-on-year increase for the first time in three years.

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THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

Australia	6.90 AS	Israel	12.00 SD
Austria	50.00 S	Italy	5.000 L
Belgium	100 BF	Latvia	40.00 LK
Canada	1.50 C\$	Malta	0.10 C
Denmark	1.20 D\$	Netherlands	6.50 D
France	112 F	Norway	20.00 NOK
Germany	20.00 DM	Poland	320 PL
Greece	12.00 Dr	Portugal	320 P
Holland	10.00 G	Spain	375 Ptas
Ireland	5.00 IM	Sweden	25.00 SKr
Japan	80.00 Y	Switzerland	5.50 Sfr
South Africa	750 R	Turkey	1,250.000 TL
USA	85¢ US	UK	53.50

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IN THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

So, Eileen Drewery, do you think you'd have been burned as a witch in the Middle Ages?

GLENN HODDLE'S FAITH HEALER ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

THE BEST WRITING, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD JACOBSON, HAMISH MCRAE, IAN JACK, ROBERT FISK, FLORENCE BLACKER, SUSANNAH FRANKEL, BRIAN VINTER, PHILIP HENSHER, JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID AARONOVITCH, DEBORAH ORR, THOMAS SUTCLIFFE, MILLS KINGTON, STEVE ARNOLD, ANDRIAS WHITAM SMITH

■ ARTS
'SMACK THE PONY':
SO IS IT FUNNY
OR WHAT?
PLUS FASHION
AND THEATRE

Solicitor risked safety to speak out

ALTHOUGH SHE worried about her security in an area regarded as one of the most bitterly divided even by Northern Ireland standards, Rosemary Nelson continued to maintain a high public profile.

The risks were obvious. She became closely identified with the nationalist community of Portadown's Garvaghy Road, which has been the subject of scores of loyalist demonstrations since the security forces stopped the Orange Order from marching along it last July.

In January, for example, she accompanied a delegation of local nationalists who met Tony Blair in Downing Street. She also acted for the family of Robert Hamill, who was killed to death by loyalists several years ago in an incident which continues to attract political controversy.

Mrs Nelson also represented around 200 nationalists who have been seeking compensa-

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

tion from the Royal Ulster Constabulary over Drumcree-related incidents.

She often acted not just as a legal representative but as a public spokesperson for such causes. Just yesterday for example, the Belfast nationalist paper the Irish News featured comments by her in its lead story and in another article.

The front-page story revealed that Robert Hamill's sister would address a meeting in Belfast later this month together with Duwayne Brooks, who was with Stephen Lawrence when he was murdered in London. Mrs Nelson was quoted as saying: "The full details of the Hamill case are even more horrific than the facts of the Lawrence case. He was targeted because he was a Catholic. We are seeing racism here, racism dressed up as sectarianism."



Rosemary Nelson (left) with a Garvaghy Road residents' delegation in Downing Street after a meeting with the Prime Minister in January. She maintained a high public profile despite fears for her security. John Voss

In the other article she complained of what she said was a low level of arrests of Orange Order supporters in the continuing Drumcree protests. Quoting a parliamentary answer which said that 38 illegal Orange marches have taken place since June, she said: "The law has been flouted openly."

She added: "We have a nationalist community trapped,

living in a village on the edge of a town. It is not about conflicting rights here, it is about the rule of law."

Such sentiments would not endear her to the Orange Order, or to the fringe loyalist organisations who have been prepared to use violence in support of what they view as the Orange right to march.

She was also by her own ac-

count highly unpopular with the police, whom she accused of assaulting her on a number of occasions. When a United Nations investigator put her allegations to the Government, the official reply was that she had made complaints but had not made herself available for interview to discuss them.

Most Northern Ireland solicitors put aside all thoughts of

adopting crusading positions following the loyalist assassination of a prominent Catholic solicitor, Pat Finucane, in 1989. Since then most have stuck firmly to the technicalities of the law, eschewing public controversies and confining their activities to the strictly legal.

Mrs Nelson was therefore highly unusual in being prepared to take issues into the public arena.

UDA 'may be drifting back to killings'

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK

ALTHOUGH IT was regarded as instantly obvious yesterday that loyalists of some description were responsible for the death of Rosemary Nelson, the authorities will worry that the attack represents an ominous sign of the state of the cease-fires of major loyalist groupings.

The security forces and the government will fear that the attack was carried out by or with the assistance of, a major loyalist grouping such as the Ulster Defence Association (UDA).

There have been recent concerns that the UDA, one of the two big loyalist paramilitary outfits, was showing signs of becoming detached from the peace process. The grouping has found itself out in the cold of late, since representatives of its political wing failed to win seats in the Belfast assembly.

The fear has been that without a political anchor it might drift away from the peace process and return to killings.

Loyalists have in recent months been the main source of violence in Northern Ireland. They have carried out roughly the same number of "punishment" attacks as the IRA, and have also petrol-bombed several dozen Catholic homes.

The level of killings has by Northern Ireland standards been low, loyalists have been responsible for three of the four

deaths since last September. Two of these were carried out by a small splinter group, the Red Hand Defenders.

But although this group has some guns most of its attacks have been carried out using crude petrol-bombs or pipe-bombs. The question therefore arises of whether it had the capacity to make a device such as that which killed Mrs Nelson. The UDA, however, has in the past used such devices.

There is also a historical pointer towards the UDA in that the organisation was responsible for the killing in 1989 of a solicitor, Pat Finucane, who like Mrs Nelson was viewed as a highly effective advocate for nationalists and republicans.

Mr Finucane's case remains a political issue, with allegations of official collusion gathering ground. Only last month more than a thousand legal figures from all over the world signed a petition calling for an investigation into his death. Last night republicans and nationalists were already alleging security force involvement in Mrs Nelson's murder. Her killing seems destined to join that of Mr Finucane in the annals of the many cases accruing more and more allegations as the years pass.

Britons will be bomb targets, say Turkish rebels

BRITISH TOURISTS to Turkey were warned yesterday by Kurdish nationalist rebels that they are likely to become targets in its latest bombing campaign which has already resulted in 13 deaths.

The Foreign Office urged British visitors to be "aware of the dangers", following a spate of explosions. Both the German and Dutch governments said they were viewing the situation

BY KIM SENGUPTA AND
JUSTIN HUGGLER
in Istanbul

"very seriously" and would fully inform their citizens of the risks involved.

The PKK, the Kurdistan Workers Party, which launched the current wave of bombings following the capture of its leader, Abdullah Ocalan, by Turkish authorities declared

that Turkey was now a "war zone" and tourists are likely to get caught up in the crossfire.

The group declared "all of Turkey has become a field of war. This includes the areas seen by the Turkish republic as areas of tourism."

"It is essential that no tourist comes to Turkey that governments warn their citizens and that travel companies cancel their reservations."

A serious disruption of the Turkish market would be a financial blow for a number of tour operators. Turkey has become an extremely popular destination for UK families, attracting a million British visitors every year. The travel firms Thomson, Airtours and First Choice said they were awaiting further guidance from the Foreign Office.

In the current campaign fol-

lowing Mr Ocalan's capture last month the PKK bombed an Istanbul shopping centre on Saturday, killing 13. The city was hit by three bombs, with a fourth defused. Yesterday the offensive continued with two bombs in Ankara, one person was injured.

After the weekend bombings the Foreign Office warned British tourists to take "sensible precautions" in the light of

"a substantial number of terrorist incidents and public disturbances in Istanbul and sporadic attacks elsewhere in the country". Later a spokesman said this was being revised in the light of yesterday's bombings in Ankara and the warning from the PKK.

The PKK has issued such warnings before and a few travel firms were sceptical of the extent of the threat. Mike

Newman of Savile Row Tours and Travel Ltd in London, whose first bookings to Turkey are for the second week of April, said he was waiting, like others for Foreign Office guidance. But he added: "It is just scaremongering. The pressure will be unrelenting until the Ocalan court case and then it will die down."

Savas Kuce, director of the Turkish Tourist Office in Lon-

don said: "We take this very seriously, but we have put in place all the precautions to protect tourists."

"These threats are made every year and I do not think they can do anything to harm British tourists - if they did they [the PKK] would see the consequences."

Nine million people visit Turkey each year, earning the country £4.4bn in 1997.



BRITAIN TODAY

General situation: Southern and western England and Wales will have a dry and mild spring day with sunny spells after any early fog has cleared. Northern and eastern England will also be mild but will start off cloudy with drizzle in places before brightening up this afternoon. Scotland will be mostly cloudy with outbreaks of rain, these most frequent in the west, where there will be extensive hill-fog. Northern Ireland will also have rain in the west but the east will have a few sunny breaks.

London, SE England, Midlands: A cloudy start but mild again with sunny spells developing later. A light and variable wind. Max temp 14-16C (57-61F).

Cent S & SW England, Channel Is, Wales: A dry day with decent spells of sunshine after any early fog has cleared. A light and variable wind. Max temp 11-13C (52-55F).

E Anglia, E & NE England: A cloudy morning with drizzle in places but brightening up in the afternoon. Mild. A light to moderate south-west wind. Max temp 13-15C (55-59F).

Cent N & NW England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man: A cloudy morning but some sunny breaks this afternoon. A light to moderate south-west wind. Max temp 12-14C (54-57F).

NE & SE Scotland, Edinburgh, Aberdeen N Isles: A mild but mostly cloudy day with patchy rain and drizzle gradually dying out in the afternoon. A moderate to fresh west to south-west wind. Max temp 12-15C (54-59F).

NW & SW Scotland, Glasgow, W Isles: Mostly cloudy and wet, the rain easing in the afternoon. A fresh to strong south-west wind. Max temp 11-13C (52-55F).

N Ireland: A cloudy morning with outbreaks of rain and drizzle. Clearer and brighter later. A moderate to fresh south-west wind. Max temp 11-13C (52-55F).

OUTLOOK

Most parts will be dry and mild tomorrow with plenty of sunshine, the best of it in Wales and the south on Thursday with sunny spells. The north will be cloudy and breezy with showery outbreaks of rain.

TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout. Layover. Major roadworks on new M11 link road. Until 31st December.

Bristol: M5 J18-19. Major Roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 23rd June 2001.

Warrickshire: M42 Between J10 Tarnewton services and J9 Sutton Coldfield. Roadworks and contraflow. Until 23rd April.

South Yorkshire: M1 Between J34 Tinsley Viaduct (A6108) & J34 Tinsley Viaduct (A6178). Sheffield. Carriageway a reduced to two lanes southbound. Until 21st November 2000.

Gloucestershire: A40 Lansdown Rd.

Cheltenham. Closed due to roadworks around. Diversions in place. Until 1st June.

Co. Antrim: A1 Kingsway. Durnurry. Roadworks, various lane diversions. Until 1st August.

Derbyshire: A8 Between Derby Southern Bypass (A50) and Shardlow Road roundabout. East of Alkington. Contraflow for work on new A50. Until 15th October.

AA Roadworks: Call 0336 401777 for the latest local and national traffic news.

Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

LIGHTING UP

Belfast	6.29pm to 6.35am
Birmingham	6.13pm to 6.18am
Bristol	6.16pm to 6.21am
Glasgow	6.22pm to 6.27am
London	6.06pm to 6.11am
Manchester	6.14pm to 6.20am
Newcastle	6.11pm to 6.16am

HIGH TIDES

Location	HT	PM	HT
Avonmouth	6.07	12.8	6.31
Cork	4.28	4.2	4.47
Devenport	4.41	5.2	5.07
Dover	9.58	6.3	10.21
Dun Laoghaire	10.29	3.9	10.58
Falmouth	4.12	5.0	4.38
Glasgow	11.47	3.3	-
Hartlepool	11.01	3.8	11.18
Holyhead	9.22	5.4	9.48
Hull (Albert Dock)	5.22	8.1	5.30
Kings Lynn	5.25	6.2	5.31
Lough	1.34	5.1	1.50
Liverpool	10.15	9.1	10.38
Millford Haven	5.11	6.5	5.33
Newquay	4.04	6.6	4.25
Portland	5.51	1.8	6.25
Portsmouth	10.19	10.4	10.47
Swansea	7.08	4.6	7.28
Swanborough	3.05	5.2	3.15
Wick	10.15	3.4	10.51

AIR QUALITY

Location	Wob	SO ₂
London	Moderate	Good
S England	Moderate	Good
Wales	Good	Good
London	Moderate	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises:	06.14
Sun sets:	18.06
Moon rises:	05.52
Moon sets:	16.31
New Moon:	March 17th

WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecasts call 0800 5000 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met. Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

RAIN OR SHINE...

FLOODS in central Mozambique have killed 23 people and left more than 6,000 people homeless, the United Nations said yesterday.

The UN report estimates more than 70,000 people have been affected by the flooding, brought on by three months of rain. The worst-hit district is the coastal area around Vilankulo and flooding has also blocked Mozambique's main north-south highway, isolating the coastal town of Inhassoro.

Source: The United Nations.

Source: The United Nations.

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Source: The United Nations.

YESTERDAY

Warmest London 15C (59F)

Cooldest (day): Llewellyn 8C (46F)

Wettest: Luton 12 mm

Seas: Lowest: Lowest 11 hrs

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THE WORLD

EUROPE NOON TODAY

Key: 10-10C, 11-20C, 21-30C, Over 30C

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THE INDEPENDENT
Thursday 16 March 1999

THE INDEPENDENT
Tuesday 16 March 1999

HOME NEWS/3

Fury as Bulger killers win review

THE MOTHER of James Bulger reacted angrily yesterday to a ruling by the European Commission of Human Rights that her son's killers had been denied a fair trial.

The Commission upheld complaints lodged by lawyers for Jon Venables and Robert Thompson, who were both 10 when they killed two-year-old James in 1993. The ruling paves the way for the case to go before a full human rights hearing later this year.

Venables and Thompson were convicted of murder after they abducted James and dragged him for two miles before killing him and leaving his body on a railway track.

James's mother, Denise Fergus, said yesterday that she would "fight until the day I die if I have to" against any moves to review the convictions.

She said: "They say they were unfairly treated - why didn't they stop the case when it was going on, instead of waiting six years before they say it? I don't think they were unfairly treated in any way. They had top lawyers, social workers, care workers. They had the best of everything."

Rex Makin, the solicitor who acted for James's father, said the ruling was another "turn of the knife" for the family.

The Commission rejected claims that the court case, in which the boys faced adult criminal procedures, amounted to "inhuman and degrading treatment. But it agreed that they had been prevented from participating effectively in their trial, violating Article Six of the European Convention on Human Rights."

It also found that the article had been contravened by the sentencing role played by the Home Secretary, who was not "an independent and impartial tribunal".

The Government cannot be compelled to free the boys, but if the full hearing finds that their human rights were breached, it would be forced to change the way it tries children accused of serious crimes in the future.

It could also curb the Home Secretary's future powers to decide the sentencing of convicted minors. The trial judge recommended that the boys should serve a minimum of eight years. This was later increased to 15 years by the then home secretary, Michael Howard. The law lords ruled last year that Mr Howard had acted unlawfully.

In his ruling, the Commission said the pair were placed in a raised dock, as the focus of intense public attention over a period of three weeks, and said it was "significant" that neither child gave evidence.

But Albert Kirby, the detective superintendent who headed the investigation, said the dock was raised so the boys could see what was going on. "Even the parents [of the defendants] were very grateful for all the work we did," he said.

Leading article Review, page 3

The dark vortex that emerged from this murder to destroy so many lives

FOR SEVERAL years the dark vortex that lies at the heart of the Bulger murder case has lain dormant. But it never takes much to fire it up again. And within minutes of the news from Strasbourg yesterday that the European Commission had decided that there was something deeply wrong with the way we dealt with the entire affair, the frenzy began.

Was it justice to expose two 10-year-olds, both educationally subnormal, sucking their thumbs and falling asleep, to the full panoply of a three-week jury trial, during which they said not a word and understood practically nothing of what was happening? Was it right for a populist politician, the then home secretary Michael Howard, reacting to an almost hysterical public demand for vengeance, to overrule the judge and increase their sentence from eight years to 15 years? Was Britain justified in stating that children of 10 are old enough to be criminally responsible in the first place?

In coming days this frenzy will increase and Britain will, as it always has done when James Bulger's face appears in the newspapers, divide into two implacable and angry camps.

The first, and by far the largest, will be outraged by the news James's murder, to them, was uniquely evil, and therefore Thompson and Venables, no matter how young they were, were also evil. In the words of one newspaper, "those little monsters must grow old and rot in jail" for the rest of their lives. This camp, and it includes many on the soft left, want no more Mary Bells living free on social security and making money out of their memoirs.

The other camp, and it is very small, consists of those who feel that Britain's reaction to the murder was barbarous and fuelled by a lynch-mob mentality. It is led by a determined legal team who have fought for six years to prove that the trial was a cruel farce, that the murder was not pre-meditated, and the killers, two practically illiterate children from difficult backgrounds, committed an act so unfathomable that they could not explain it even to psychiatrists.

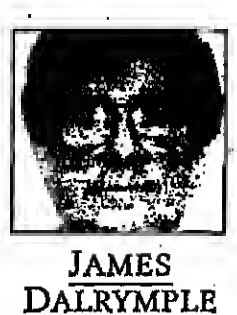
It is clear that this savage and strange affair will never produce perfect answers. No-



Robert Thompson (left), James Bulger (centre) and Jon Venables: The case divides Britain into two implacable and angry camps



Credit



JAMES DALRYMPLE

body is right and nobody is wrong in their attitudes. Denise Fergus, James's mother, has every right to her blind hatred of the killers. And the mothers of Thompson and Venables have the right to fight for their sons' right to the possibility of release and redemption.

Whatever the outcome in the European Court of Human Rights, the Bulger murder is no longer a matter for contemplation and compassion. It has entered that strange and macabre pantheon of criminal freakery that includes dark icons such as Myra Hindley, Mary Bell, Rosemary West and Reggie Kray.

Whatever the endgame may be, nobody can doubt the scale and depth of the tragedy. Dozens of people had their life disrupted for ever.

Mrs Fergus and her former husband, Ralph, were shattered by the loss of their child and the venomous rumour mill that accused them of profiting financially from the publicity and a huge fund that was launched in James's name.

They were a loving young couple but their marriage broke down in the mayhem. Although she is now recovered and working hard for victim support groups, Mrs Fergus is still consumed with hatred. In the manner of the Moors Murder victims' mothers, she seems to wait for any hint of their release before launching into a powerful attack on the killers and their supporters.

And what of Venables and Thompson, living in private suites in separate remand centres? They are now 16, both grossly overweight through boredom eating, and almost unrecognisable from the cherubic snapshots that once filled the newspapers. They are allowed unlimited visits from their parents, and are watched constantly by experts skilled in the understanding of violent and unpredictable behaviour. The psychiatrists have prodded and probed at them for years, but according to sources inside their legal teams, neither boy has ever admitted killing James.

Neither has shown any signs of aberrant behaviour. They are neither violent nor disruptive. They watch censored videos and go to daily school classes. Both have now reached almost normal reading ability and Thompson is said to have a reasonably high IQ.

But each one continues to blame the other. It is now clear they may have mentally erased, perhaps for ever, large parts of that day. In a couple of years' time they are scheduled to move into adult prisons, perhaps under new names. But it will not take long for the prison grapevine to identify them, and for their own safety they will probably be held in special wings along with baby killers and sex offenders.

Since the trial they have never laid eyes on each other.

But their mothers, Ann Thompson and Susan Venables, now using other names, visit them several times a week. Today they apparently talk very little of the murder. Neither boy has ever spoken to his mother about it in any detail.

Detectives who worked on the case still consider that Thompson was the prime mover in the events of that day. And one of the first lawyers to see him, in the hours after his arrest, is convinced that he will never admit he killed James - especially to his mother. "Maybe it has been buried so deep that even he cannot remember it all," he said. "He both adores his mother and is afraid of her. I believe that he will never admit his role while she is still alive. With this kind of horror bottled up inside him I fear for his sanity when he becomes an adult. He was a strange and lost little figure, who could be quite cool and tough. But he is no psychopath and he never showed violence or even had temper either before or since the murder."

Thompson's coolness unnerved the police at the time. He remained stonily silent and did not cry. Seasoned detectives grew to hate him and there are still those today who regard him with the same loathing they reserve for adult sex criminals.

There is no doubt that of the two families, his was the most abusive and violent. His father, a womaniser and a drunk, never once came to see him and has not seen him to this day.

Venables was the opposite. He collapsed after his arrest and wept for days in his mother's arms. And during his trial he often simply buried his face in his hands, or played with his necktie. His mother, Susan, is sure that he is convinced that he was led by Thompson and that he played no part in the final attack on James. She feels that he never understood a single word of what was happening throughout the three-week trial.

Apart from seeing each other in court, both mothers have never met. Both paid a high price for their son's crime. Attacked and vilified in the streets within hours of the arrests, they were suddenly uprooted from their native city and their friends, never to return, even for a visit.

Both women, according to

their lawyers, have shown courage and resilience. Ann Thompson, who had a bad drink problem, recovered and is now totally sober. Her other children remain with her and she has vowed she will follow her son to whatever prison he is moved to. She fully accepts that her son may be a killer, but she waits and hopes that he may some day come home to her.

In the early days she wrote him a long letter, almost as if she was writing to an adult. In it, she stated: "No matter what you did or didn't do, I'm your mother and I will stay with you no matter what happens." Robert, apparently, destroyed the letter and made no mention of it.

Susan Venables, too, has proved a tower of strength for her son. At the time of the killing her husband, Neil, was living apart from the family and passed the time watching rented videos. One of these, *Child's Play 3*, was mentioned in court, and headlines screamed that it was this horror story that inspired the killing. But Jon never visited his father's flat and never saw the film. It was just another of the demon elements of the affair, stories that grew from nothing into an established fact.

The Venables family lawyers of the time recalled that such headlines almost drove her to mental collapse. "She had a husband who could not cope, who collapsed on the first day," he said. "Her home was surrounded by a screaming mob, she was attacked and spat at in the street. But she found strength from somewhere. She is now a magnificent mother, and she supports her son in every way. But she, like Ann Thompson, is no wiser to the events of that day. He will simply not talk about it."

The two have free access to television sets and they see news bulletins every day. But by all accounts they have no interest in their legal affairs. If the Bulger murder is mentioned on the screen they leave the room. "Somehow they have both adopted the same technique for dealing with it all," said the lawyer. "Day by day, and year by year, they have simply cut the whole thing from their minds. In the early days each one blamed the other and could give their recollections of what happened. Now it seems not to exist, and as the years go by it could even be possible that they have genuinely erased it from their minds."

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Dimbleby attacks BBC 'inertia'

DAVID DIMBLEBY, one of the BBC's most celebrated names, has criticised the corporation for its excessive bureaucracy and inertia.

The *Question Time* presenter also delivered a scathing put-down on the Prime Minister's favourite "Cool Britannia". He said he had never been invited to Downing Street in all his years in broadcasting, and added: "Maybe if I snorted

decision-making because it relies on endless focus groups and analysis," he said in a *Radio Times* interview published yesterday.

The post of director-general was advertised this week in advance of Sir John's retirement later this year. Mr Dimbleby, 60, applied for the job in 1987 but lost to Sir Michael Checkland. He would have run the BBC differently from Sir John Birt, who took over in 1992, he said. "I hope I'd have had a subtler ear for broadcasting."

Mr Dimbleby also believed it was "a mistake" for the BBC to chase ratings. "You don't have to sink to the lowest common denominator," he said.

He particularly disagreed with the late scheduling of *Question Time*, saying it was "crazy" to put the programme out after 11pm.

ARTS
SMACK THE PONY:
SO IS IT FUNNY
OR WHAT?
PLUS FASHION
AND THEATRE

FRANKIE, BRIAN VINER,
DREW AS WITHAM SMITH

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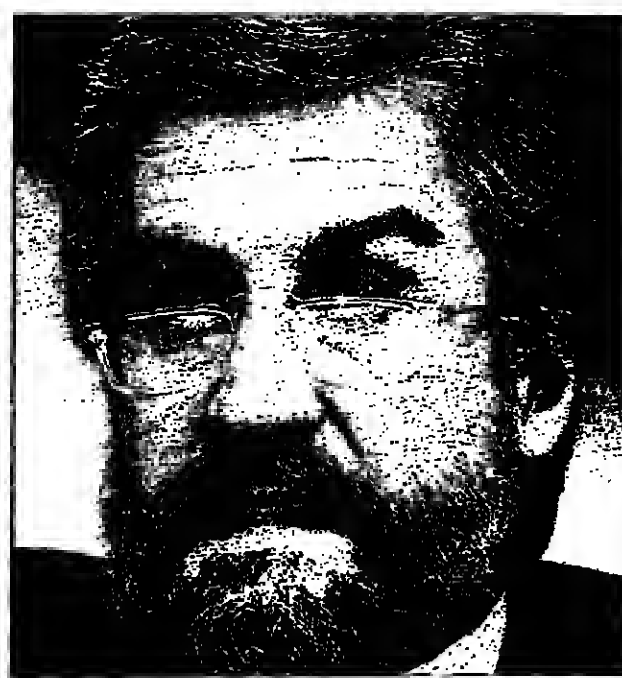
EUROPE IN CRISIS - THE LEADING PLAYERS



EDITH CRESSON

Never the most popular of European Commissioners, Ms Cresson, 65, has been thrown to the centre stage of the controversy row. But as a woman who made her name as France's first female premier her hallmark is toughness and she has shown no desire to quit. Still best known in Britain for casting doubt on the

sexuality of a quarter of all Englishmen, Ms Cresson's lack of tact has made matters worse in this case, too. In January, when she appeared before the European Parliament, she struck an arrogant tone and an eleven-hour charm offensive, both in the media and among MEPs, may have been left too late.



MANUEL MARIN

The 49-year-old Spanish Socialist is one of the youngest members of the Commission and also its longest serving, having been appointed by Madrid in 1986, the year Spain joined the EU. A high achiever at any early age, Mr Marin's star has been fading ever since. A brooding, isolated and melancholic figure, he

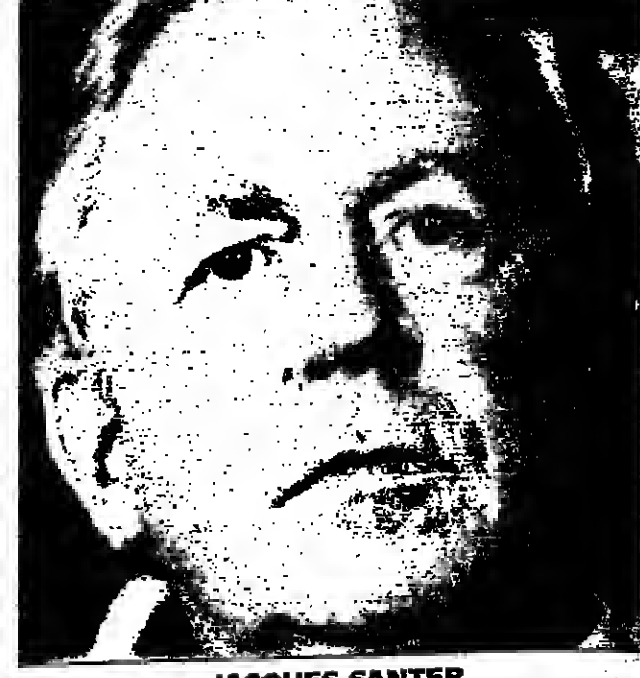
has not displayed much charisma or understanding of the demands of public relations. Irregularities relating to his office's recruitment of consultants - known as "submarines" because they were invisible - are now under police investigation but Mr Marin denies any personal wrongdoing.



PAULINE GREEN

The leader of the 214-strong group of socialist MEPs, Ms Green has played a crucial role in the crisis even if, by her own admission, things have not turned out as she expected. The 50-year-old MEP for London North called the censure motion, which plunged the EU into crisis in January, in the expectation

that it would be voted down. The events in January, when Parliament came closer than ever before to voting the Commission out of office, marked a decisive turning point. Ms Green now argues that, unless Jacques Santer, acts to remove anyone criticised in the report, it will be his "head on the block".



JACQUES SANTER

The former prime minister of Luxembourg emerged from obscurity to succeed Jacques Delors as Commission President when John Major vetoed the majority choice - Belgium's Jean-Luc Dehaene - at the Corfu summit in 1994. Apart from keeping already well-laid plans for the launch of the Euro on a

relatively even keel, Mr Santer has not come up with a single memorable initiative. An avuncular, mild-mannered man known as Jacques Sancerre because he enjoys fine wines, the 62-year-old President has yet to convince MEPs that he has the clout to push through the crackdown on cronyism he promised in January.

EU fat cats shared the rich cream of patronage with their pet cronies

THE LINE of shiny black limos parked outside the European Commission's Breydel building in Brussels told its own story. It usually takes a crisis to draw all 20 Commissioners to their official workplace on a Monday, but that may be an understatement for the convulsions gripping the upper reaches of the European Union.

As the presses worked overtime churning out English and French copies of a long-awaited inquiry into cronyism, fraud and corruption in Brussels, the sense of a drama permeated the ranks. In a lift in the European Parliament, one secretary was overheard confiding that she was so excited she had been unable to sleep.

BY STEPHEN CASTLE AND KATHERINE BUTLER
in Brussels

On trial are not only those Commissioners whose personal and political failings have been well documented, but the culture in which they operate. Never before has the Commission, the unelected and often arrogant executive of the EU suffered such intense scrutiny, knowing the way it responds will shape the future of Europe's institutions.

The crisis convulsing the EU sprang from the work of a worthy but dull committee of the European Parliament, whose task it was to examine the Union's accounts for 1996.

Threats made earlier this year that the MEPs would not approve the accounts looked lame until, on the eve of a crucial vote, the Commission circulated a "back us or sack us" ultimatum. To the shock of its cosseted members, the Commission gambled on a macho tactic and lost the vote went the other way.

That defeat was followed by a censure motion in Strasbourg, put down in the expectation that it would be heavily defeated. (To be successful, and sack all 20 Commissioners, a two-thirds majority is needed.) At this point the Commission made its next big error, by arrogantly suspending a whistle-blowing auditor who

leaked an extensive dossier of irregularities to the Greens in the European Parliament.

Paul van Buitenen's revelations were seized on as new and flagrant abuses on the part of Edith Cresson, the Education and Research Commissioner and Manuel Marin, a Vice President of the Commission. In January, MEPs came close to voting the entire Commission out of office, only pulling back when they were promised a thorough, independent inquiry.

Mr Marin, from Spain is under attack over administration of the multi-billion pound humanitarian aid budget, "Echo", which he controlled until 1995, and a programme to help Mediterranean countries

fallen victim to its own supreme aloofness and disregard for its public perception. From the beginning, its handling of the fraud allegations has made matters worse. Queries from MEPs and even police were brushed aside, journalists who reported the allegations were threatened with libel writs.

When it did examine its own structures, the Commission faced an uphill task to root out the type of cronyism and mismanagement now viewed as endemic. Brussels has no agreed administrative culture; what is cronyism in one country is legitimate use of patronage in another and such practices have seeped into the hybrid Brussels bureaucracy.

One of the most notorious practices in the Commission is an accepted fact of life even among the British. This is the phenomenon known as *le parachutage* where members of Commissioners' private offices - most of whom do not sit the normal recruitment exams - are dropped into the juiciest permanent positions.

The Portuguese commissioner, Joao de Deus Pinheiro, sees nothing wrong with employing his brother-in-law as deputy *chef de cabinet*, one of the most senior positions in the private office. Mr Pinheiro's wife is also an employee of the Commission, as is Mr Marin's.

Some Commissioners and their staff are hard working but others are not and some of those who are well-intentioned discover that their portfolios do not make up a full-time job.

Much comes down to personal inclination; according to one top official, the directorate of Martin Bangemann, the Industry Commissioner, "has done almost nothing for the last three years". Marcelino Oreja, the Spanish Commissioner has made almost no impact and a recent poll of European newspapers produced a league table of performance listing, among the bottom six, the Environment Commissioner, Ritt Bjerregaard ("as invisible as CO₂"), and Christos Papouthis, who is in charge of energy policy.

It is, of course, an irony that it is the Parliament, which has its own gray train image, should have provoked such a crisis. But what started as a dispute over a set of figures has turned into Brussels's biggest institutional clash for years. With the Commission looking vulnerable, and European elections looming, MEPs, so long the Cinderellas of the European political power game, saw a golden opportunity for revenge.

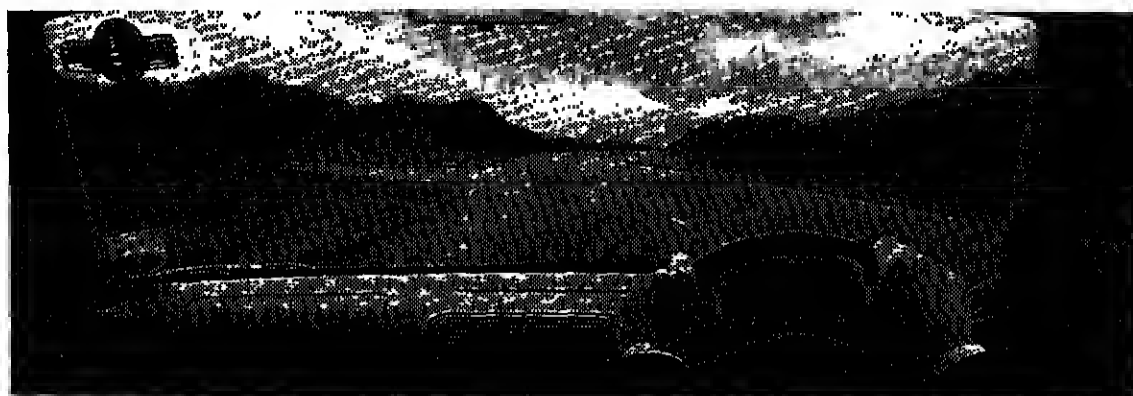
Yet Ms Cresson - the clearest target - has shown a determined reluctance to quit, similar to her refusal to resign when she was prime minister

of France (she was eventually sacked by François Mitterrand). She is also locked in a bitter dispute with Jacques Santer, the European Commission President, who, she believes, is lining her up to be a scapegoat.

MEPs have been quick to up the ante, arguing that if Mr Santer does not act, his head will be on the line. The Commission President does not have the power to fire a Commissioner, but he can refer their case to the European Court of Justice which has the power to "compulsorily retire" the person in question. Mr Santer probably needs the backing of a majority of Commissioners to do that.

As they prepared for a crisis meeting last night, the stage was set for a dramatic denouement. The 20-strong college of Commissioners is not of one view: there are divisions between those due to retire, and those hoping to serve again. There are personal friendships and rivalries and there is an awareness that decisions taken will set a precedent for the future. As one source put it: "All 20 will sit around the table and eyeball each other. That's always a tough thing to do - no matter how courageous you are as a politician."

Few doubt that, whatever the outcome, the politics of Brussels has changed for good.



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IN BRIEF

Balloonists on course for record

THE ANGLO-SWISS round-the-world balloon bid yesterday entered the jet-stream over Hawaii. Brian Jones, 51, from Wiltshire, and Bertrand Picard, 41, have now flown further than any other balloonists and will be the first to circle the globe if they reach North Africa this weekend.

Jailed art fraud ringleader appeals

THE MASTERMIND who made £1m from the century's biggest modern art fraud is to appeal against his six-year prison sentence. At Southwark Crown Court yesterday Judge Geoffrey Rivlin, adjourned the hearing to seize the assets of John Drewe, 50, until six weeks after the appeal.

Employee settles racism claim

A BLACK social worker who accused his employers Plymouth City Council and former employers Devon County Council of racism settled his claim amicably after a week of evidence at an industrial tribunal in Exeter. Jon McKenzie, 36, of Newton Abbot, Devon, was represented by Unison.

Religious brother on sex charges

A 73-YEAR-OLD religious brother appeared before Galway District Court yesterday charged with 48 counts of indecent assault against young boys at the city's Brothers of Charity centre between 1965 and 1969. The defendant - who cannot be named - was remanded on bail.

Boy, 2, survives fall from flats

A TWO-YEAR-OLD boy, Dene Cumming, survived a fall of about 40 feet from a fourth-floor bedroom window in a block of flats in Aberdeen yesterday. He suffered cuts and bruises.

Comedy writer Sid Green dies

Sid Green, co-writer of classic sketches for Eric Morecambe and Ernie Wise, died yesterday in hospital in Frinton-on-sea, Essex, aged 71. He was among the most prolific writing duos of the late Fifties and Sixties.

TERENCE BLACKER



While other students found sex, I was getting up at 6.15 to ride out

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW PAGE 4

Labour wants Dobson for London mayor

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

FRANK DOBSON, the Secretary of State for Health, is likely to bow to strong pressure from Tony Blair to become Labour's candidate for mayor of London.

Although Mr Dobson has made it clear that he does not want the job, senior sources in the Government and Labour Party said yesterday he was "wavering" and may now throw his hat into the ring.

"Tony Blair thinks Frank would be an excellent candidate," said one source. "We understand his reservations, but it is difficult to turn a job like this down when the party needs you to do your duty."

Mr Blair's allies insist he would not threaten to dismiss Mr Dobson from his cabinet post if he turned down the request to run for mayor, but would seek to persuade him to enter the race.

A former leader of Camden Council, Mr Dobson, now MP for Holborn and St Pancras, has strong London connections. The Labour leadership looks certain to veto Ken Livingstone, the left-wing MP for Brent East, on the grounds that he has breached a code of conduct for



Frank Dobson: Tony Blair is putting on pressure

candidates on campaign spending and materials. Mr Dobson is popular among London Labour Party members, and his entry into the race would placate much of the anger at the exclusion of Mr Livingstone.

Mr Dobson, who was 59 yesterday, has argued that the job should go to a younger man or woman. He has told friends he does not want to become "Mr London" because he loves his job at the Department of Health and does not want to subject his wife and three children to the intense media scrutiny that running for mayor would provoke.

Trevor Phillips, the broadcaster, said on Sunday that he would run for mayor and hoped to stand as a Labour candidate.

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Ashton hits out at police 'leak'

Lennox Lewis (left) and Evander Holyfield discussing their controversial fight on ABC's 'Good Morning America' ABC News

Lewis rumpus leaves only the shape of the ring undisputed

"MY BOY won the fight - and you know it," railed the mother of Lemnox Lewis to his controversially unvanquished opponent Evander Holyfield, following their world heavyweight boxing title bout in New York. And boy didn't everyone agree with her?

The scene may have brought the noble art down to the level of trailer-trash daytime TV confrontation, but few on either side of the Atlantic seemed to have any doubt that the redoubtable dame was right.

Boxing officials ordered a rematch for the drawn fight, headlines screamed of robbery, and the British sports minister, pitched in. Commenting on the

BY JOHN DAVISON

verdict of the one judge who gave the fight to Holyfield, Tony Banks told radio listeners: "Now we don't know why... but quite clearly it was the wrong decision... What fight was she actually watching?"

The trouble was that most of the British public being invited to join this "we robbed" debate hadn't seen any fight at all, and are unlikely to. Unless they were domestic cable or dish subscribers willing to pay between £11.95 and £26.95 for the fight, or had a friendly landlord willing and able to open to the early hours, the argument would be all sound and no fury.

And commentators who saw it in the flesh agreed with the eventual outcome. Not that you would think that by reading the headlines. "STITCH-UP!" screamed *The Sun's* front page, outlining allegations of a "CRIME OF CENTURY." Only after reading Colin Hart, the paper's boxing correspondent, was it revealed that he, too, had scored the fight as a draw. In the *Daily Mail*, under the headline "Robbery," the writer Jeff Powell had also "made it a draw."

In New York, *The Independent's* Richard Williams was another to agree with Larry O'Connell, the beleaguered British judge who gave both fighters 115 points and effectively held the contest's casting vote.

But all the fuss seemed to have had an effect on Mr O'Connell's perception yesterday. "Judged on the weight of opinion, I would say I was wrong," he conceded after arriving back at his home in Kent. "But I did what I thought was right at the time. I can't be any more honest than that."

Speculation was that a rematch was good news for the money men of the fight game, particularly Don King. But Mr O'Connell dismissed any suggestion that the fight may have been fixed as "absolute crap."

Undoubted winners have been the bookmakers. Punters

normally back one fighter or the other; so the bookies have a very good day when nobody wins.

Even Ladbrokes, which gave the best odds for a draw of 40-1 and had to fork out £20,000 to one punter, maintained that it was still the best result for them. Turnover across Britain for the fight would have been above £1m, a spokesman said.

For William Hill, a spokesman said: "We couldn't have pre-ordained a better result."

Brave words indeed, under the circumstances.

Rematch ordered
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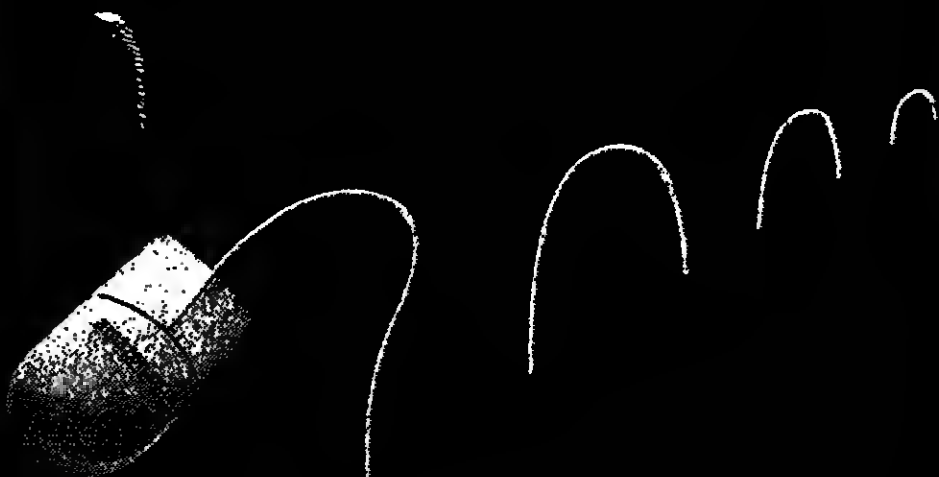
did are misleading. I did not partake in or pay for any sexual services either. I am now considering ... the implications of the publication of unauthorised information to the media and whether to ask for an investigation by the Police Complaints Authority."

Northampton police said they had no plans to investigate how information about Mr Ashton was leaked to the media and that they had received no specific complaints about the conduct of any of their staff.

■ The Government is "absolutely committed" to make kerb-crawling an arrestable offence as soon as possible, the Home Office minister, Paul Boateng, told the Commons.

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Record number of police inquiring into charges against colleagues

BY JASON BENNETT
Crime Correspondent

MORE THAN 1,200 senior policemen and civilians are currently investigating an unprecedented number of allegations of corruption and wrongdoing against fellow officers.

A survey by *The Independent* has found that there are 800 officers in England and Wales, almost all of superintendent, inspector and sergeant ranks, working on complaints and anti-corruption inquiries.

Their salaries cost an estimated £30m a year – equivalent to the pay of 1,300 police constables.

The study has also revealed that a record number of police forces are being used by the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) to carry out investigations into other forces.

There are 19 ongoing PCA inquiries into serious cases that include allegations of intimidation, deaths in custody, and sexual harassment.

The Home Office and chief constables are concerned about the growing numbers of officers and resources being diverted to examine the conduct of the police rather than concentrate on fighting crime in the community. A review is being carried out to bring about savings and improvements.

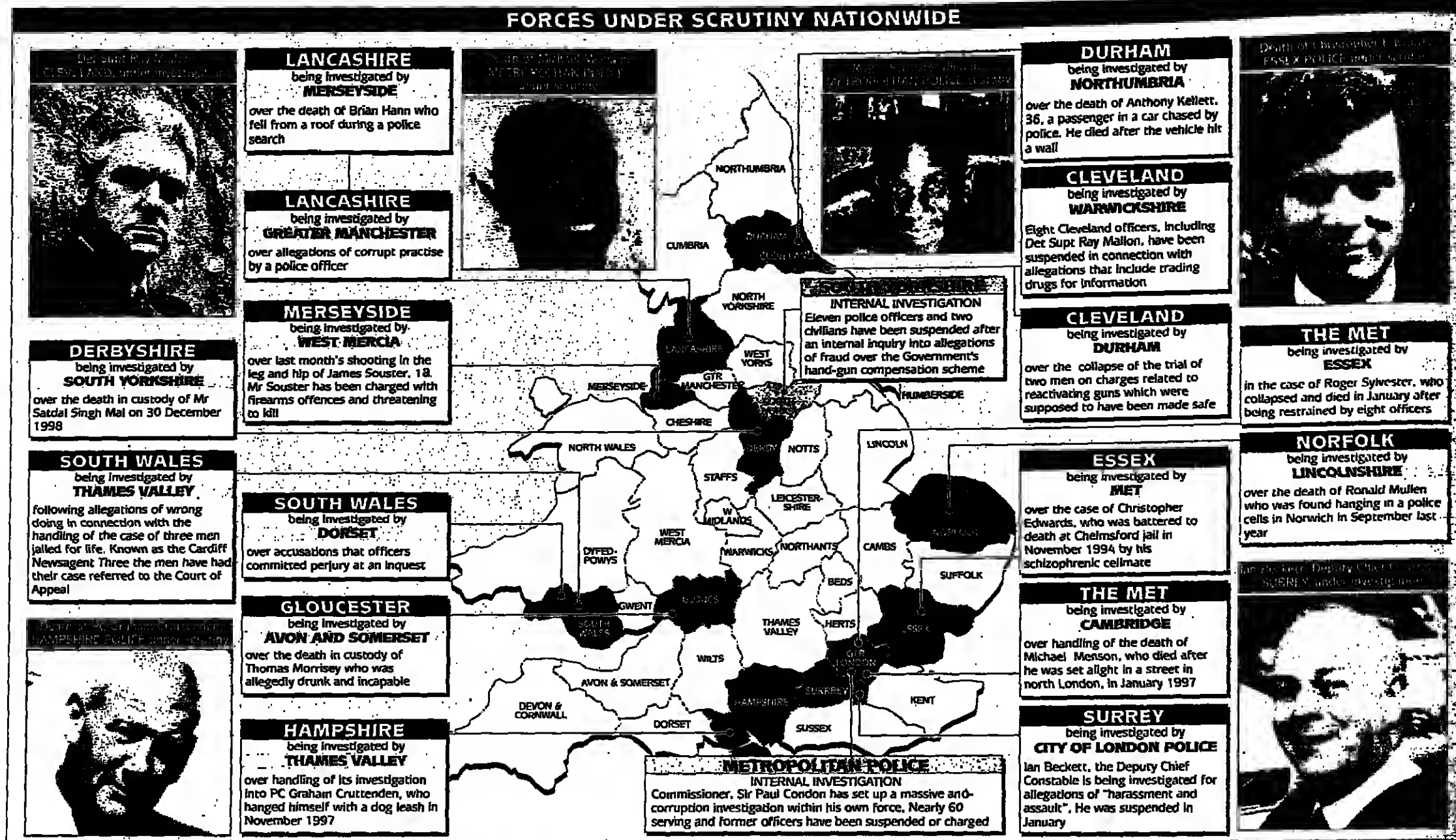
One idea being examined, which has the backing of police chiefs, is a national network of independent ombudsmen attached to each force.

Until now there has been no national figure available for police personnel employed in investigating fellow officers.

The Independent contacted all 43 forces in England and Wales and obtained details of the number of people working in the complaints and discipline department and in specialist anti-corruption units.

In the handful of cases where forces refused to give details the numbers have been estimated by comparing them with similar-sized forces. Figures have also been obtained for the number of officers working on behalf of the PCA to investigate outside police forces.

The Metropolitan Police



have by far the largest number with 302 officers. Of these 214 are members of the pro-active unit, CIB3, which is spearheading the Met's largest anti-corruption drive for decades. So far nearly 60 officers have been suspended or charged as a result.

Merseyside Police have a 20-strong professional standards department, a confidential telephone hotline for officers, and a pro-active squad.

West Midlands Police have a similar set-up but employ 23 officers and 15 civilians in their department, and in a separate anti-corruption unit.

Several forces use specialist units for serious allegations of corruption within their own force. South Yorkshire have a team of eight investigating allegations of fraud involving the Government's handgun compensation scheme.

But even smaller forces in-

vest significant resources. For example, Norfolk's complaints and disciplinary department is staffed by a superintendent, two chief inspectors, four inspectors, two sergeants and three civilians.

The forces that refused to give any information, arguing that it was confidential, were Greater Manchester, Hertfordshire, South Yorkshire, Humberside, and West Yorkshire. In addition, the survey found

there are about 85 officers deployed on PCA-supervised investigations outside their own force area. The largest case involves 20 staff from Essex Police who are investigating the death of Roger Sylvester, a black man who died in January after being restrained by eight police officers in north London.

A PCA spokesman said: "The number of outside forces used has increased. During 1998-99 at least 25 outside

forces will have conducted PCA supervised investigations compared to 14 in 1995-96."

The current total of 19 live investigations is believed to be a record.

Next month new measures come into force to make it easier for chief constables to sack incompetent and corrupt officers.

George Hedges, Chief Constable of Durham and spokesman on disciplinary issues for

the Association of Chief Police Officers, stressed that only 0.5 per cent of the complaints made to the PCA were allegations of corruption.

"At the moment there's no alternative but to investigate all complaints however minor."

"There's a massive waste of resources going to look at complaints."

"One idea is to have an independent legal person attached to each force to deal with

the less serious cases. This is something we are looking at," he said.

Chief Superintendent Peter Gammon, president of the Police Superintendents' Association, added: "There's no question that disciplinary issues are an enormous expense costing millions of pounds, but you need a system that the public has confidence in and that demonstrates that wrongdoers will not be tolerated."

Prison charity boss fired over finance allegations

A RELIGIOUS CHARITY which is allowed by the Prison Service to run jail wings has sacked its national director amid allegations of financial irregularities and administrative failings.

The Kairos-APAC Trust, which has units in five prisons, dismissed Kenner Jones because of "growing concerns" over his methods of running the fast-expanding organisation. The sacking is an embarrassment to Prison Service chiefs who have given the project enthusiastic support because it has helped reduce jail unrest.

The scheme puts inmates in contact with Christian volunteers and encourages them to undertake a spiritual experience, known as "The Journey".

But *The Independent* revealed in January that Mr

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

Jones had a 25-year history of fraud, which includes at least 70 previous convictions. He has been jailed in Britain, Canada and the United States.

Mr Jones, 48, yesterday denied that he had done anything wrong and said he was preparing to take the charity to an industrial tribunal for unfair dismissal. He claims he is owed nearly £5,000 in unpaid wages and expenses.

The charity's trustees have complained that Mr Jones is denying them access to papers and property in their former office, inside his home in Weymouth, Dorset. Mr Jones said he was not prepared to relinquish the files until the dispute is resolved. Next week, the trustees are to meet with Charity Commissioners to discuss the charity's overdue accounts.

Yesterday John Adams, the chairman of the trustees, said he did not wish to discuss Mr Jones's dismissal because the matter was in the hands of the charity's solicitors.

Mr Jones, who was last jailed in 1996 after committing a series of frauds while a volunteer for the Liberal Democrats, became involved with Kairos whilst an inmate at Verne prison in Dorset. After his release, he swiftly became its national director.

The trustees justified the dismissal of Mr Jones with a list of eight accusations. They include failing to report funding deficits, appointing staff with-

out authority, failing to forward correspondence from the Charity Commission and "glossing over" financial details. Although he was not supposed to have direct access to the charity's cash, Mr Jones is also accused of "payment of monies from Trust funds to another association without authority".

Mr Jones said yesterday that this was a reference to a decision to give "a couple of hundred pounds" to help prisoners at Verne buy equipment for a school for the blind in Exeter. He said the payment was agreed by colleagues who had signed the cheque. He said he was anxious to resolve the dispute without damaging the work of the charity. "My priority is to make sure the project does not fail."

The Prison Service said yesterday: "We recognise that the involvement of Kairos in prisons does appear to bring some benefit to the day-to-day running of the prisons where it is in place. But we continue to monitor it closely."

Kenner Jones: Dismissed amid 'growing concerns'



Kenner Jones: Dismissed amid 'growing concerns'

Mr Jones's solicitor, Heather Cowan, said her client was an "extremely dedicated man" who had issued the trustees with a detailed written rebuttal of the accusations that have been levelled against him.

The Prison Service said yesterday: "We recognise that the involvement of Kairos in prisons does appear to bring some benefit to the day-to-day running of the prisons where it is in place. But we continue to monitor it closely."

Law caught in its own offside trap

AN AUDACIOUS plan by 50 Manchester United football supporters to infiltrate rival supporters' seating for tomorrow's big match against Milan was doomed from the outset.

The fact that they were based at Greater Manchester Police headquarters sealed their fate. The desperate officers decided to go undercover after legitimate attempts to watch the Champions' Cup quarter-final with Internazionale were rebuffed.

They tried, without success, to get 50 seats together for the first match, at Old Trafford 12 days ago. Efforts to get seats in the United end tomorrow at the San Siro stadium encountered the same problem.

So the police officers, including riot and siege veterans, contacted Inter with an "any-chance-of-50-tickets-money-up-front" offer. The Italians promptly informed their senior officers back at Chester House.

"As soon as we received the information, the application was withdrawn," a police spokeswoman said. This is hardly surprising, since Greater Manchester Police has insisted on strict segregation of United and Inter supporters – off-duty police included.

Uefa, European football's governing body, stopped the sale to British tour operators of tickets in sections of the stadium earmarked for Inter supporters, and security fears have been heightened by circulation of up to 6,000 forgeries.

BY JONATHAN FOSTER

Exactly how four Transit van loads of Manchester police officers planned to go incognito to Milan is unclear. Police social club sources speak of 50 "genuine" Armani sweat shirts bought from a snout in a Swinton pub, plus rigorous practice of San Siro vernacular – "Torta di bistecca e patate e brodo di manzo, per favore carissima" ("meat and tatty pie and a Bovril, please darling").

"This wasn't an appropriate activity for Greater Manchester Police," the spokeswoman said. "But it is not seen as a disciplinary matter. We should emphasise that there was no official request for tickets by Greater Manchester Police – an individual acted on their own initiative to try to obtain tickets on behalf of the social club."

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Suhartos sell boltholes in UK for £11m

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

THE EXTENDED family of Haji Mohamed Suharto, the former Indonesian president, is selling £11m worth of London property - lavish real estate that bears testimony to the extravagant lifestyle they enjoyed.

The decision may stem from the fact that in Jakarta, the Indonesian capital, an investigation is under way into how the Suhartos made their fortune and, as a result, Britain is refusing visas to many family members.

Denied the free access to London they once enjoyed, the Suhartos have put three properties in expensive areas of the capital up for sale.

One north London property - an eight-bedroom detached house with banqueting rooms and marble floors in Winton Road, Hampstead Garden Suburb - is on the market for £8m, the price having been reduced from £9.5m. Another house nearby, being sold for £1.95m, was used by the family servants.

The family is also believed to own another three properties in London and the Home Coun-



The sales mark the end of an extravagant lifestyle

ties, though it is not clear if they intend selling them.

The sales signal the end of a bizarre association between the Suharto family and London. For two decades they used it as a bolthole and playground.

The tales of their exploits are legion. To those in favour, the Suhartos were generous hosts. An Indonesian student who went to parties at one of the properties in Winton Road thrown by Suharto's granddaughter, Eno Sigit, said: "It is not what most of us are used to but that is the thing with Eno - she is not like the rest of us."

Indeed she was not. While she was a fashion student at the American College in central London, to which she travelled each day by chauffeur-driven

Rolls-Royce, her father, Sigit Harjojudanto, threw her a party at the Hilton Hotel. The bill came to a reported £150,000. "Whatever she wanted, she could have," said another acquaintance. "Change your mobile phone. Change it twice a day. Just because you don't like the style or the colour."

Another home in Winton Road is in the name of Mr Harjojudanto's wife, Ietje Ratnawati, but is used almost exclusively by the family's friends and retainers.

Such luxury might seem excessive but that was the way the family lived. "Imagine you're one of the London cronies," said another acquaintance, also preferring to remain anonymous. "Not the first level - one of the children or grandchildren - not even the second level, but just one of the third layer: close to the family, but not that close. Even those people live in luxury - a flat in Lowndes Place, a big car, seven bedrooms. As for the family themselves, they lived like sheikhs. They spent money like water."

A visitor to another of the properties said: "You could only use about two of the rooms. The



Members of the Suharto family, the richest in Indonesia. Former president Suharto is with the late first lady, Tien Suharto, in the centre



£8m 89 Winton Road, Suharto parties were held in its banqueting rooms



£1.4m 38a Putney Hill, home of Suharto's half-brother



£1.95m 8 Winton Road - used by the Suharto servants

rest were filled with boxes, shopping bags from Selfridges which had been there for years. They've bought them and never got round to opening them, and they've forgotten what's inside. It's scary." A friend who

went gambling at the Ritz Casino with Suharto's eldest son, Tommy, said: "One night he dropped more than £1m without even giving it a thought. Then we went to dinner."

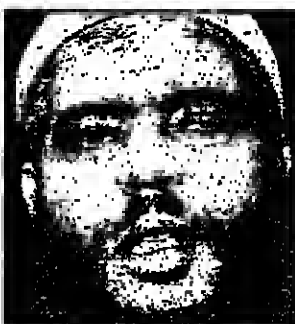
Across London, in Putney,

Suharto's half-brother Probosutejo is selling Norfolk House, a detached three-storey home with four reception rooms, a billiards room and servants' quarters on the upper floor. Mr Probosutejo, who has owned

the property for 16 years, has put it on the market for £1.4m. The denial of visas to family members follows a decision by Britain last year to refuse entry to Suharto's son-in-law, Prabowo Subianto, disgraced

former head of the Indonesian special forces. While the corruption investigation launched by President BJ Habibie, who replaced Suharto last year, is unlikely to touch him, the family is taking it seriously. None of the members was at the London properties yesterday. Last night the Tajal Indonesian human rights group urged Britain to freeze the Suhartos' assets, estimated at billions of pounds.

A spokesman, Paul Barber, said: "It is clear the family are selling their properties in London so that the proceeds can be hidden away. The demands of the Indonesian people that the family and cronies account for their wealth and human rights crimes have not been satisfied."



Hamza: Held for questioning

THE MUSLIM cleric at the centre of allegations over Islamist terrorism operating from Britain was last night being questioned by anti-terrorism squad officers.

Sheikh Abu Hamza was arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act early yesterday morning at his home in west

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

London. He and two other men arrested at different addresses were taken to Charing Cross police station in central London. Police can question the men for 48 hours without charging them or seeking an extension.

Mr Hamza, 40, was at the

centre of controversy earlier this year over allegations that terrorists were operating out of London. His group, Supporters of Shariah, which is based in a north London mosque, had said it supported armed action.

In particular Mr Hamza, who was born in Alexandria, has had his name linked to an

alleged plot to blow up various targets in Yemen. One of five men currently being tried for conspiring to cause explosions in Yemen is Mr Hamza's stepson, while his son has been arrested on similar charges.

Mr Hamza admitted he spoke to the head of the gang who seized a dozen Western

tourists - three of whom were later killed - on the day of the kidnapping last December.

Since the arrest of his family members, the one-eyed cleric who said he lost both his arms while fighting with the mujahideen in Afghanistan, has denied any knowledge of such a plot. He has persistently

accused the Yemeni government of spreading propaganda and obtaining confession through torture, an allegation supported by the five men's lawyers.

Last night Mr Hamza's supporters said he had been arrested along with two other Egyptians. They named one as

Yasir As-Sirrie, also known as Abu Ammar, head of the Islamic Observatory Centre in London.

A spokesman for the Supporters of Shariah, Haroon Rashid, said: "He [Mr Hamza] has only been arrested for questioning involving terrorist activities here. He has done no terrorist activities here."

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Members are all talk when it comes to the big question

THE HOUSE OF Commons can be a depressingly decorous place sometimes. This isn't the received opinion, of course, which tends to tut-tut piously over the raucous breaches in courtesy which, all too rarely, demonstrate that someone has actually become agitated about a point of principle.

But when you really hope MPs will misbehave they almost invariably don't – and this is never truer than when word has gone round that an MP appears to have been caught misbehaving outside the House.

Yesterday, for example, many of the conversations in the corridors

will have touched on the weekend's exciting revelation that a Labour MP had been found on the premises when the police raided a Thai massage parlour.

Certainly journalists were talking about it and while I don't wish to libel elected representatives, than whom no higher-minded body of people exist, I think it is fair to say that the odd member might have mentioned it – plus most of the even ones as well.

For journalists facing the prospect of Jack Straw answering questions about the public information campaign on the voting system for the European elections,

this naturally offered a distant shimmer of hope. Crawling across the burning sands of employment statistics for West Mercia police force for the year 1998 to 1999, we were heartened by the sight of palm trees far away on the horizon.

If we could just make it to Question 11, an inquiry from Jenny Jones about what plans Mr Straw had to review the law on kerb crawling, surely the innuendo-drought would break.

Someone would make a sly joke and we could plunge gratefully into the mud-hole, cackling hysterically as we slaked our thirsts. Not a bit of it. The question could hardly have

THE SKETCH



THOMAS
SUTCLIFFE

been more pertinent, really. Ms Jones wished to raise the anomalies in the existing laws on

prostitution, which apparently make kerb-crawling an offence though not yet an arrestable one. She was also concerned to shift the full weight of the law off prostitutes' shoulders and onto those of their male exploiters, both pimp and client.

This was the right moment to do it but even so she may have regretted that the ballot had put her question so far up the order paper.

Paul Boateng took a different tack, halting his vehicle and decorating the outside with outraged banners: the Government would be considering how best to deal with "those who ply this evil trade," he

said. The sentiments were unimpeachable and the Victorian high style rather pertinent, since he was talking about child prostitution, but Mr Boateng's moral indignation is too opportunistic to be entirely convincing anymore. Tyres squealing, he too headed off for a more respectable neighbourhood. Tory MPs, perhaps aware that once mud starts getting thrown there's no knowing who might get splashed, sat uncharacteristically silent.

There was still a faint hope of executive relief – as luck would have it the MP for Northampton North, Sally Keeble, also had a question on

the order paper. She wanted to know what steps Mr Straw was taking to reduce crime in shopping centres, to which one obvious answer might be that her local police force could spend less time in local massage parlours and more time patrolling the streets. There was a rather sarcastic "hear, hear" from Nicholas Soames when Mr Boateng finished his scrupulously bland response, but not a hint otherwise that most members were trying to keep a straight face.

They had all opted for what you might call the Fawley gambit – whatever you do, don't mention the whore.

MPs tell Blair to accept cut in EU rebate

TONY BLAIR'S campaign to save the £2bn-a-year rebate on Britain's payments to the European Union was undermined last night when a parliamentary committee urged him to surrender the refund.

Today he will come under more pressure to accept a cut in the rebate, won by Margaret Thatcher in 1984, when he meets Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, for talks on the EU budget at Downing Street. Privately, ministers admit Britain may have to give some ground to secure agreement on reform of EU finances at a summit of leaders in Berlin next week.

But Downing Street reiterated last night that the rebate was not negotiable.

The report by the Labour-dominated House of Lords committee on Europe warned Mr Blair that his determination to keep the rebate could wreck plans to reform the much-criticised common agricultural policy (CAP) and to allow Eastern European countries to join the EU. The peers admitted that Britain had a problem over its high contributions to EU cost-

EUROPE
BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

fers, but said the rebate might no longer be the best way to solve it. The refund should be "negotiable" as part of a fairer funding system.

"It would be regrettable if the entire package (including CAP reform and the possibility of funding enlargement) were to be lost because the UK government insisted there was only one way of solving its problem," said the report.

"Equipping the EU to handle enlargement is a very big prize; we urge the Government not to throw it away."

As a compromise, the committee proposed that Britain give up the rebate on condition that the loss be recouped through savings from a reformed CAP, a freeze on EU spending by 2006 and possibly by higher EU spending in this country.

Patricia Hewitt, the Treasury Economic Secretary, told the committee the Government was "prepared to look at other options" but insisted that

Britain could not help other countries by worsening its own problems.

Downing Street said there were "bigger questions" to be discussed than the rebate at today's talks between Mr Blair and Mr Schröder.

But their common relief at last week's resignation by Oskar Lafontaine, the German Finance Minister, may be overshadowed by Germany's demand for the abolition of the British rebate.

Mr Blair's spokesman said he would insist the special deal was still justified. "Even with the abatement we are the fifth-largest contributor per head [to the EU] and by most accounts the 10th richest."

The Lords committee also called for much more openness over the way the EU spends its money. It said: "We are already being taxed to finance EU expenditure, yet we have virtually no knowledge of what we are paying – or what we are paying for. We call on the Government to consider without delay how this transparency can be achieved even under the present financing system."



Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, answering questions in the Commons yesterday when he announced a £3.5m publicity campaign to explain the new system of proportional representation for the European elections in June

On your bike, say Tories to pupils

TRANSPORT
BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

THE GOVERNMENT should encourage more children to walk or cycle to school instead of penalising their parents with high car taxes, the Conservatives urged yesterday.

Gillian Shephard, the shadow Environment and Transport Secretary, called for a comprehensive review of the 1944 Education Act to create workable alternatives to the "school run". Parents could be persuaded to stop ferrying their children to school by car only if they were certain that the alternatives were safe, she said.

Unveiling her party's Transport Policy Forum in the House of Commons, Mrs Shephard claimed that urgent action was needed because the school run added up to 20 per cent to rush-hour traffic jams. However, the solution was not to impose taxes that would hit the poorest parents hardest but, instead, to hand over transport funds from local councils to individual schools.

Among the ideas under consideration by the Conservatives are more dedicated cycle lanes to boost dramatically the numbers of children who get to school under their own steam.

Another major initiative would involve more "crocobus" walking schemes to allow primary pupils to be picked up at home and escorted to school by teachers or supervisors.

Bernard Jenkin, the Conservatives' transport spokesman, said that the 1944 Education Act meant that local council provision of school transport was arbitrary and unfair. "The way pupils travel to school has changed dramatically over the last 50 years and yet the statutory framework remains the outdated Act. Most pupils used to walk or cycle to school," he said.

"Most parents, particularly working women, prefer to drive their children to school and we believe that they should be allowed that choice."

"But we want to give them a real choice in home-to-school transport. We want every school to be able to develop a green transport plan that offers safe, reliable and convenient alternatives to the car." The Conservatives claimed the Budget would tax motorists off the roads and that the haulage industry was set to lose 50,000 jobs because of hikes in duties.

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Secret deal with GM firms denied

THE GOVERNMENT denied yesterday that it had entered into a "secret deal" with biotech firms to ban commercial planting of genetically modified crops until 2001.

However, ministerial embarrassment over the issue deepened when Mark & Spencer became the latest food giant to announce it was removing the substance from all its own-brand products.

Michael Meacher, the Environment minister, moved to deny reports that the Government had agreed a voluntary, three-year moratorium with the biotechnology industry.

But within hours of Mr Meacher's statement, M&S said that it was imposing its own ban in response to customer concern that GM

FOOD
BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

technology was moving "too quickly".

The food and clothing chain, one of the leaders in the booming market in "cook-chill" ready meals, said that GM ingredients would be removed from all St Michael food products "as quickly as possible".

It joins Iceland and Waitrose supermarket chains, both of which have stated that they will phase out GM ingredients from their own brands.

Both Mr Meacher and Downing Street dismissed speculation that civil servants had drawn up a deal with the companies at the centre of GM research such as Monsanto,

Novartis and Zeneca. Mr Meacher insisted that the Government had not changed the terms of the current two-year voluntary ban on commercial planting that was negotiated with the firms last October.

He confirmed that the current agreement with the biotech firms will run out in spring 2000, but added that it could be extended if there was insufficient evidence to back safe commercial planting.

Regulating the commercial production of GM food will cost the taxpayer £5m this year, including £3.7m on research, the Agriculture minister Lord Donoughue disclosed. He added that 74 people were working on policy development, research co-ordination and regulatory functions related to GM food.

THE HOUSE



'Deport Fayed'

HARRODS OWNER Mohamed Al Fayed should be deported rather than given a British passport, Gerald Howarth, the Tory MP for Aldershot, urged.

Mr Al Fayed's brother Ali Fayed was given approval to obtain a British passport last week. Applications by the brothers were rejected in 1995.

Today's agenda

Commons: 2.30pm
Foreign Office questions.
House of Lords Bill.
Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1989 (Continuance)
Order: Lords: 2.30pm
Access to Justice Bill, third reading. Debate on tourism strategy.

Extra £100m given to ease casualty waiting time

FRANK DOBSON, the Secretary of State for Health, yesterday pledged to end the scandal of National Health Service patients waiting for hours on hospital trolleys, announcing an extra £100m to modernise accident and emergency departments.

In a Commons statement, Mr Dobson said the money would be spent on upgrading casualty departments, making them more "pleasant and more secure" by next April. Another £150m from the National Lottery's New Opportunities Fund would go on replacement equip-

HEALTH
BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

ment to fight cancer, he said. However, none of the money will be spent on extra staff. Much of the £430m from last week's Budget will instead be spent on admissions wards so patients needing treatment can be moved quickly out of casualty.

Ann Widdecombe, the Tory health spokeswoman, described the initiative as "old money recycled as new announcements".

Mr Dobson also confirmed that up to £30m would be spent on improving direct access to the NHS, including pilot schemes for "walk-in" GP practice services in shopping malls. The Government was defeated in the Lords over its plans to scrap GP fundholding and replace it with a new system of primary care trusts.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Cost of explaining voting system

A TOTAL of £3.5 million of taxpayers' money will be spent on publicity explaining the "closed lists" system of proportional representation for June's European elections, Home Secretary Jack Straw announced.

Passports for pets 'coming soon'

THE ANIMAL quarantine regulations will be replaced "as soon as possible" with the "passports for pets" scheme, junior agriculture minister Lord Donoughue promised.

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question

...the order paper. She wanted to know what steps Mr Straw was taking to reduce crime in shopping centres, to which one obvious answer might be that her local police force could spend less time in local message parlours and more time patrolling the streets. There was a rather sarcastic "hear, hear" from Nicholas Soames when Mr Straw finished his scripturally bland response, but not a hint otherwise that most members were trying to keep a straight face.

They had all voted for what you might call the Family gambit - whatever you do, don't mention the word.

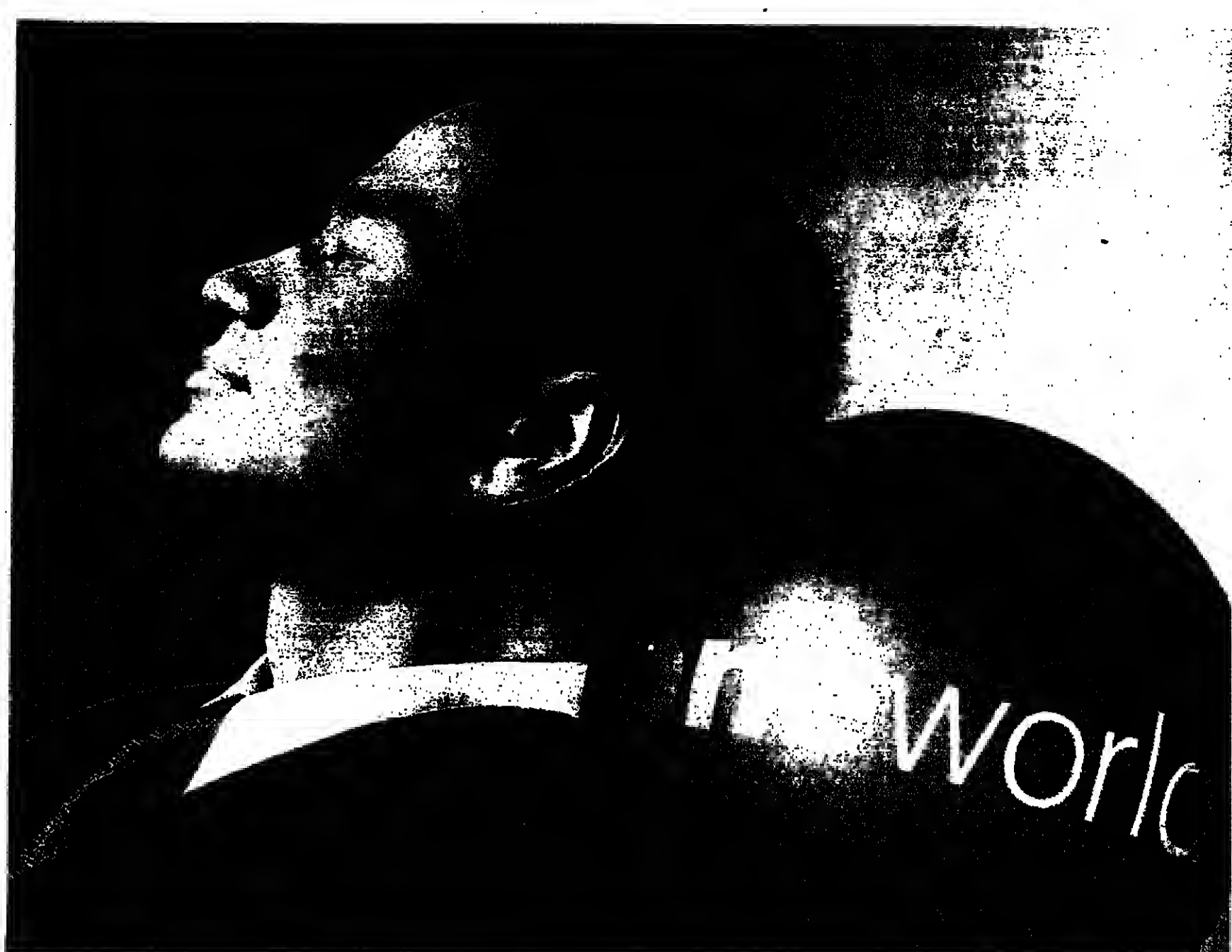
On your bike, say Tories to pupils

TRANSPORT
By Paul Wain GB
Political Correspondent

THE GOVERNMENT should encourage more children to ride or cycle to school instead of relying on their parents' cars, the Conservatives urged yesterday.

Gillian Shepherd, the shadow Environment and Transport Secretary, called for a comprehensive review of the 1944 Education Act to consider alternative means of school transport. Parents could be persuaded to stop dropping children to school in cars if there were certain alternative measures, she said.

The shadow party's Transport Secretary, Mr Shepherd, said that the government should encourage more children to ride or cycle to school instead of relying on their parents' cars. He said that the government should encourage more children to ride or cycle to school instead of relying on their parents' cars.



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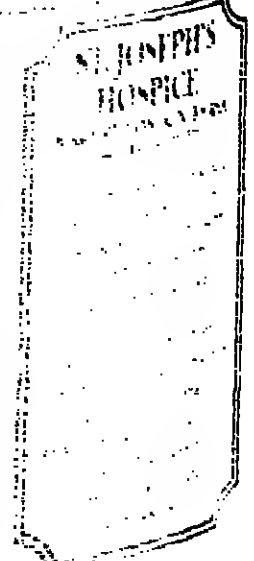
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Jews were 'mown down', trial told

A CHILDHOOD friend of the defendant in Britain's first war crimes trial yesterday recalled how he watched Anthony Sawoniuk "mow down" 15 Jewish women with a machine gun in a remote forest clearing.

Fedor Zan told the Old Bailey that Mr Sawoniuk had first ordered the women to strip to their underwear and stand in front of pre-dug graves.

"I hid myself in the bushes and observed what happened. He had a sub-machine gun," said Mr Zan. "They turned to face the pit as ordered."

Mr Zan then imitated the action of someone shooting with a machine gun. "Once that happened I looked round and they had gone. The women fell into the hole."

Mr Sawoniuk, 78, is alleged to have murdered up to 20 Jews while serving as a policeman in Domachevo in Nazi-occupied Belarus between 1941

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

and 1944. The former British Rail ticket collector who lives in south London is alleged to have organised "search and kill" operations to track down Jews who had escaped a Nazi massacre in the town in September 1942 in which 2,000 Jews were murdered in one day. Mr Sawoniuk denies all the charges.

Mr Zan, 76, had told the court that he had known Mr Sawoniuk while they were both schoolboys in Domachevo. He said he was able to recognise Mr Sawoniuk as the gunman because he was well-known in the community. "He was famous by that time," he said.

Mr Zan, who acted as a guide for the jury when they travelled to Belarus to visit the scene of the alleged killings, said he had been alerted to the women's plight by the sound of crying as

he was walking home from work.

"When I heard the cries, I walked to see where they were coming from," he said.

"They had taken their clothes off and were asked to put them in a pile. They were then asked to turn round and face the pit."

"He mowed them down with a machine gun. There were not less than 15 Jewish women."

On a previous occasion, he said he had witnessed his aunt and her family being led from the local police station to their execution. The court heard earlier that they were suspected of associating with anti-Nazi partisans.

"I was taking food to the police station for them. I saw them tied up being led through the Jewish ghetto to the sandhills," said Mr Zan.

"They were tied in a row - one after another. My uncle was

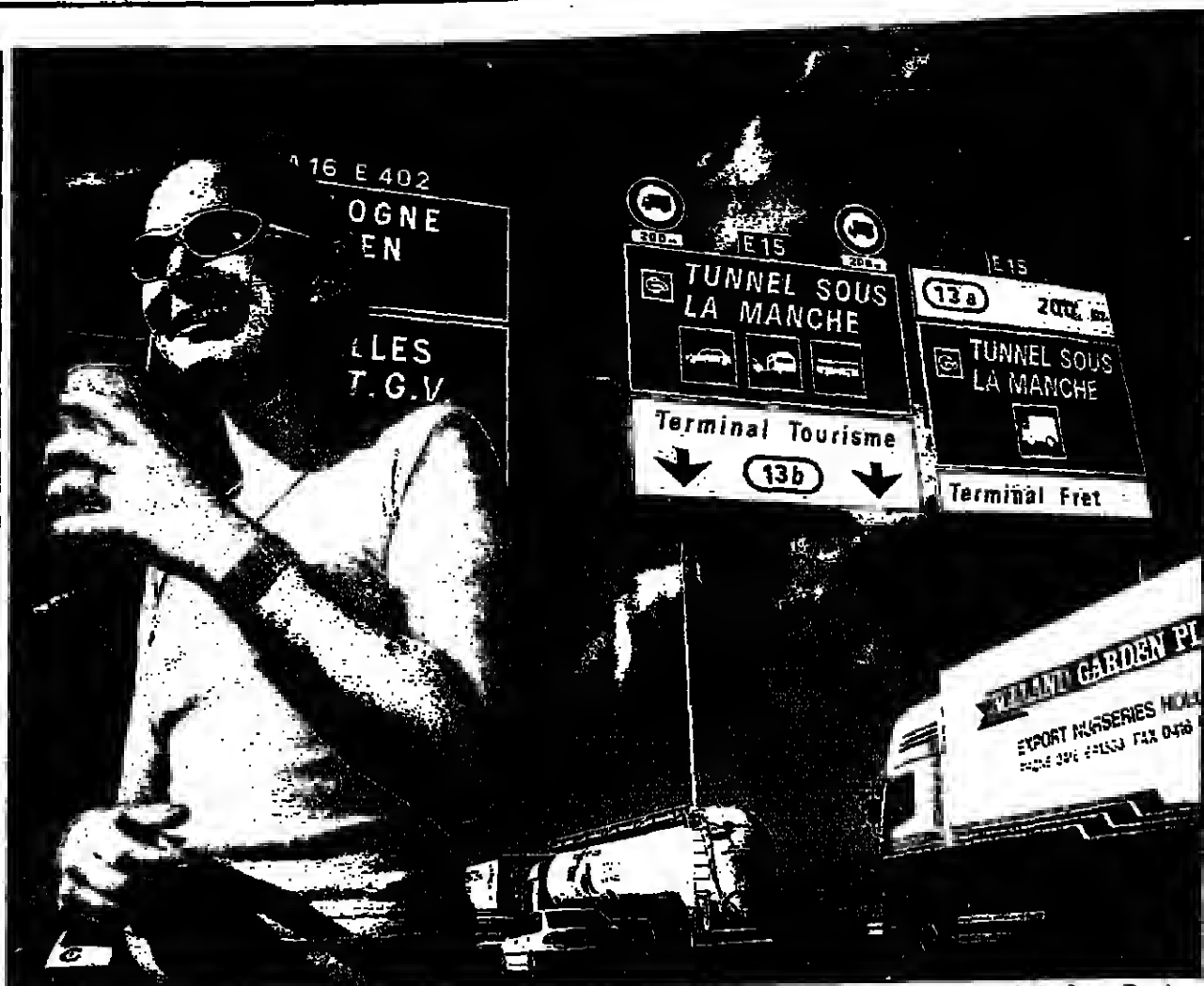
in front, aunt in the middle and my two cousins were at the back. Sawoniuk and another policeman were escorting them. Sawoniuk was carrying a sub-machine gun. The second policeman was carrying a carbine. Once they had passed through the gates of the ghetto, I did not see them again."

The trial jury was yesterday reduced to 11 members after a woman juror fell ill and was taken to hospital at the weekend.

After court staff inquired about her and found she would have to remain in hospital for another week, Mr Justice Potts decided to discharge her.

He warned the remaining members of the jury not to contact the woman in hospital although it was "highly understandable" that they might want to after sitting for nearly five weeks together.

The trial continues.



Catherine Goryn is delayed at the Channel Tunnel by French strikers angry at plans to scrap duty-free Reuters

Strike halts all Channel traffic

HOLIDAYMAKERS AND truck drivers face the threat of disruption throughout the summer as French transport workers blockaded Channel ports yesterday in protest at EU plans to scrap duty-free shopping.

More than 1,200 strikers paralysed ferry services between Dover and Calais and halted train services through the Channel Tunnel.

Workers on ferries linking Britain with the UK blockaded a motorway junction in Rennes, and the departure of a ferry from Caen for Portsmouth was delayed.

The strike prompted fears of industrial unrest throughout the holiday season. Transport unions say the end of duty-free would destroy 3,000 jobs in the Calais region, 15,000 in France and 140,000 across the EU.

Brenda O'Brien, assistant general secretary of the EU Federation of Transport Workers' Unions, said: "I think it is a very big possibility that there will be more disruptive action."

The strike began at 8am British time and finished at 2pm. P&O Stena, the ferry op-

BY PHILIP THORNTON
AND LINUS GREGORIADIS

erator, cancelled 14 sailings between 6am and 12.15pm. Eurotunnel said all passenger trains were cancelled between 10am and 1.30pm. Freight trains ran despite the strike but no lorries were allowed through until a blockade in Calais was lifted.

Keith Southey, of the Dover Harbour Board, said: "It was a much quieter day than usual. Customers have obviously heeded the warning that they would be unable to sail to Calais."

Despite the warnings, some day-trippers had their outings ruined. Jim Anslow, 59, from South Wales, said he was disappointed by the delays but sympathised with strikers. "We are talking about thousands of people who will be put out of work all over Europe."

Hauliers said the strike would cost the industry £1m. The Freight Transport Association spokesman Geoff Doss-etter urged ministers to put pressure on France to crack down on the strikers.

Eurotunnel profits, page 17

ANDREW MARSHALL

The creators of Bluewater know best, for the key to world history is shopping

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW PAGE 5

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Albanians sign and call Serbian bluff

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

IN THE first big breakthrough at the Kosovo peace talks, the ethnic Albanian delegation yesterday agreed to sign the deal drawn up by international mediators - thus confronting President Slobodan Milosevic with the threat of Nato air strikes if he does not follow suit.

In a letter to the French and British co-chairmen at the start of the second round of negotiations in Paris, Hashim Thaqi, head of the Albanian delegation, said the peace plan "offers a chance and a perspective for Kosovo and its people". He made no mention of the earlier Albanian insistence on a guarantee of ultimate independence for the Serbian-ruled province.

As fierce fighting continued in northern Kosovo, the Albanian move was welcomed in the West. President Bill Clinton declared himself "very, very pleased" and warned that if Mr Milosevic continued to prevar-

icate, the allies would have "little option" but to bomb Yugoslav military targets.

According to the French Foreign Minister, Hubert Vedrine, chairing the conference with Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, Yugoslavia "has its back against the wall". The choice for Belgrade, he said, was between isolation and peace.

For the moment, the Serbs seem to have chosen the former. "What agreement? Such an agreement doesn't exist," responded Milan Milutinovic, the Serbian President, to the Albanian decision.

He left open the possibility that Belgrade might go along with the political part of the proposals, granting Kosovo wide autonomy for a three-year transitional period. But Mr Milutinovic indicated, it remains flatly opposed to the military annex-

calling for up to 28,000 Nato peacekeepers on Yugoslav soil.

The stage is set for a showdown between Mr Milosevic and the West. Will he bow before the threat of air strikes? Or will he hold out, confident that the combination of partial concessions and lack of Western resolve will let him cling to Kosovo yet avoid bombing?

The answer should come relatively quickly. Armed with the Albanian endorsement of the deal, which could be translated into formal signature today, British diplomats indicated they expected the conference to be wrapped up, one way or another, this week.

None of the Contact group - Britain, France, the United States, Germany, Italy and Russia - is ready to tolerate a repeat of last month's exercise at Rambouillet, where 17 days of negotiation yielded a draft agreement signed by no one.

Beyond that, however, the divisions are only too evident.

Washington remains keen on bombing, but even its most loyal European ally, Britain, has misgivings. France and Italy will take even more convincing, while Russia is adamantly opposed to strikes against its traditional fellow-Slavs and Orthodox Christians.

If Mr Milosevic signs up to the political agreement but quibbles over the make-up of an international force, bombing would be even more problematic. But after so many threats, for Nato to back down at that stage would play havoc with the credibility of the alliance.

Meanwhile the Yugoslav army announced last night that obligatory military service of one year would be extended by a month, due to increased international pressure on the country "and the threat of military intervention".



Two ethnic Albanian women comfort each other as they mourn four relatives killed in the village of Grajkovac, 80km north-west of Pristina, northern Kosovo, yesterday. Oleg Popov/Reuters

Five villages ablaze in new shelling

BY EMMA DALY
in Ljubovac

SERB SECURITY forces poured rocket and mortar fire on to suspected rebel positions in northern Kosovo yesterday, as the two sides sat down to peace talks in Paris.

Smoke rose from burning houses in at least five villages in the eastern foothills of the Cicavica mountain, west of the main road between Pristina, Kosovo's capital, and the town of Mitrovica. Exhausted rebels gathered in the village of Ljubovac to rest and re-group as the fire boomed around them.

The crash of incoming shells rang out, and puffs of black smoke marked the impacts - mercifully short of the village, at least until late afternoon, when one house was hit and began to burn, sending a column of thick smoke wafting above the ridge line.

Most civilians have already left the area, since the Yugoslav army and police forces began pushing west at the weekend, assaulting the rebel-held village of Osljan. A few stalwarts remained to protect their houses and livestock - or because they had no choice.

Ibrahim Zymeri was sheltering in the garage below his house in Dubovac, near Osljan, where one shell had landed harmlessly in a straw-pile. "We escaped every other time when there was shelling, but today it was so sudden that we stayed - it is too dangerous to leave," Mr Zymeri said, as artillery rumbled in the distance.

"We still have a unit in Osljan, doing shifts," said Enver, the local KLA brigade commander, who was nursing a bandaged left hand - a shrap-

nel wound. "They tried to attack this way, but they took a lot of victims on their side."

However, the KLA has also suffered losses, including Bislime. As the sun set, the local *hoxha* said a few short prayers over the body of Bislime and his closest friends set the coffin to rest in the thick, cloying earth of Drenica, the KLA stronghold that could be threatened if the Yugoslav army succeeds in pushing the KLA off the Cicavica mountains.

"I hope this is going to be the last dead soldier," said Gani, a military policeman standing by the freshly-dug grave. "All the fighters are our friends, even if we don't know them," he said.

But Ramadan, another soldier, was sceptical. "How can he be the last one buried when they are shelling over there?" The death toll from a week-end of some of the worst violence in the year-long conflict has risen to at least 22, including eight people killed in bomb blasts and four ethnic Albanian woodcutters shot dead near Surva Reka on Sunday.

An official with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe monitors said they were encountering increased hostility from both sides. "Last week somebody fired on one of our cars. The bullets came from Yugoslav army positions," the official said.

"Yesterday the KLA checked the documents of one of our teams to see if there were any Russians among them. They said they don't like Russians."

UN helicopter missing with 13 on board

BY DAVID USBORNE
in New York

A SEARCH was under way in the Caribbean waters around Haiti yesterday for a United Nations-chartered helicopter that went missing during a flight on Sunday evening from the capital, Port-au-Prince, to Cap-Haitien, the country's second largest city.

Fred Eckhard, the United Nations spokesman in New York, said the helicopter, which had been chartered by an American company on the UN's behalf, had vanished about 20 minutes into its flight. There were 13 people on board, he said. Last night there was still no information on wreckage or the fate of the passengers.

The tragedy comes at a time when Haiti is struggling with a political stalemate that has been deepening since the resignation in June 1997 of the former prime minister, Rosny Smarth. With no replacement, Haiti has suffered a paralysis of government and a subsequent drying up of foreign aid.

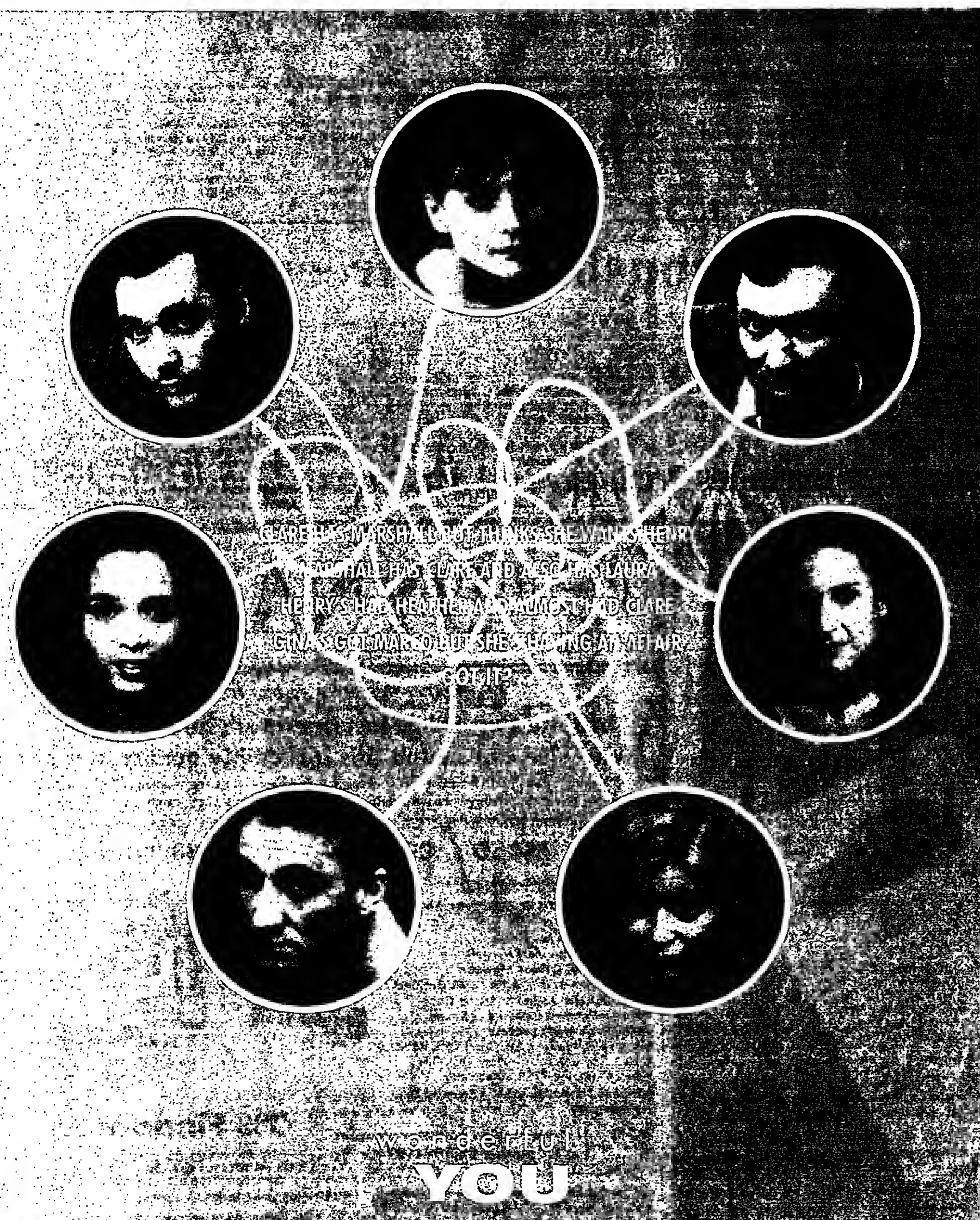
Among the missing personnel last night were five Argentinians who were in Haiti as UN

civilian police. Also on board the MI-8 Russian helicopter were six Russians, all thought to be members of the crew, as well as an American citizen connected with the company that had arranged the charter.

Sources said the group had originally left Port-au-Prince on board a different helicopter which had developed a fuel leak and returned to the capital. The second helicopter was reported missing about 20 minutes after its departure for Cap-Haitien, in the north-west of the country.

With fears mounting that the aircraft may have gone down in the ocean, the search was being assisted last night by the United States Coast Guard.

Hundreds of millions of dollars that would have flowed to Haiti from the international community have been blocked recently because of the political stand-off between President Rene Preval and the opposition parties in Haiti's parliament.



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US has 1.8 million in prison

THE UNITED STATES is heading for an unenviable record, as the nation which puts more of its people behind bars than any other.

The latest figures on US prisons show a population equivalent to that of a large city is in jail. "At mid-year 1998 the nation's prisons and jails incarcerated an estimated 1,802,496 persons," said the survey from the US Justice Department.

"It is unique in a democratic society," said Mark Mauer of the Sentencing Project, a group which questions American judicial policy.

By ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

That figure represents a rate of incarceration of 668 inmates per 100,000 residents, a doubling since 1985. By contrast, in England and Wales - which have one of the highest rates of incarceration in Europe - the figure is around 120 per 100,000. Only Russia, at 685 per 100,000, has a higher proportion of the population in jail, and the US may overtake it. The total cost of the US prison programme is about \$40bn (£25bn). The staggering increase in

the US prison population over the past 20 years has come about because of mandatory minimum sentences, the policy of "three strikes and you're out", and "truth in sentencing", which mean that inmates serve more of their sentences and are less likely to get parole.

The prison population has slowed its rate of growth as the crime rate falls in the US to 30-year lows, but it still increased by 4.4 per cent from 1997 to 1998, the survey showed.

The number of prisoners first hit a million in 1990, and even though the increase has

slowed it seems set to hit 2 million within two years. Nearly 90 per cent of prisoners are male, but the adult female prison population is growing faster than the male.

The prison system is filled over capacity, and it is adding more prison beds every two years than there are prisoners in total in Britain.

The prison population is disproportionately black and Hispanic.

Relative to their number of US residents, black non-Hispanics were six times more likely than white non-Hispanics,

nearly two times as likely as Hispanics, and almost 7.5 times more likely than persons of other races to have been held in a local jail on 30 June 1998, the Justice Department stated.

A growing proportion of prisoners are doing time for drugs offences, but there are some anomalies in sentencing. The penalties for crack cocaine, a cheap but powerful high, are significantly harsher than those for powder cocaine, which is largely the preserve of the middle-class drug abuser. The prison population is so

large that it distorts US unemployment figures and skews the voting register.

The Sentencing Project says that nearly 4 million Americans are denied the right to vote because they have a felony conviction, and nearly 1.4 million of them are black males.

The highest rates of incarceration are in the neighbouring southern states Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Mississippi. Texas and Louisiana both have more than 700 per 100,000 of their populations in jail, well over the Russian figure.

Crowd stone artist for picture of Christ with transvestites

ANGRY SWEDES protesting against a photography exhibition which depicts Christ in the company of homosexuals and transvestites threw rocks at the photographer when she stepped outside the exhibition hall.

The "Ecce Homo" exhibition, Latin for Behold the Man, has provoked protests since it was first shown in the capital, Stockholm, last summer, and at Uppsala cathedral, the seat of the country's Lutheran archbishop.

By MARCUS TANNER

The disturbances at the weekend occurred at a museum in Norrköping, 75 miles south-west of Stockholm. Several hundred demonstrators gathered outside the building and began to hurl stones when Elisabeth Ohlsson, stepped outside.

"When they discovered it was me the tumult began," Ms Ohlsson said. "I didn't think they would recognise me." She fled back into the museum, appar-

ently unhurt. Later an unidentified person telephoned to warn that there was a bomb in the museum, although no bomb was found.

The photographs include one based on Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper, in which Christ is shown sitting with disciples who look like transvestites.

The showing of the photographs resulted in the Pope cancelling a visit to Uppsala cathedral last year.

Anger as St Patrick's Day march excludes Irish gay activists

THE ST Patrick's Day celebrations in New York are again sparking confrontations with gay and lesbian activists who for years have fought unsuccessfully to join the march down Manhattan's Fifth Avenue honouring the Irish saint.

The march, to be held tomorrow, is one of the city's largest public events. A march on Sunday through parts of the Bronx, a precursor to tomorrow's main event, was marred by the arrest of six gay

By DAVID USBORNE
in New York

and lesbian marchers, two of them elected officials. All six, members of the Lavender and Green Alliance, were charged with disorderly conduct before being released.

Meanwhile, the bomb squad was brought in to search St Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue during morning services, after congregation members spotted several electronic

devices planted around the pews. They were modified alarm clocks designed to flash: "Wake up Homophobia".

Among those arrested in the Bronx was Tom Duane, a New York state senator. "I'm an Irish person. I'm a gay person. I'm here to try to march," he said.

Other cities across the US staged marches without incident. In Chicago, the river through the city centre was dyed green according to a tradition going back four decades.

Israeli drought cuts off Jordan's water supply

By PATRICK COCKBURN
in Jerusalem

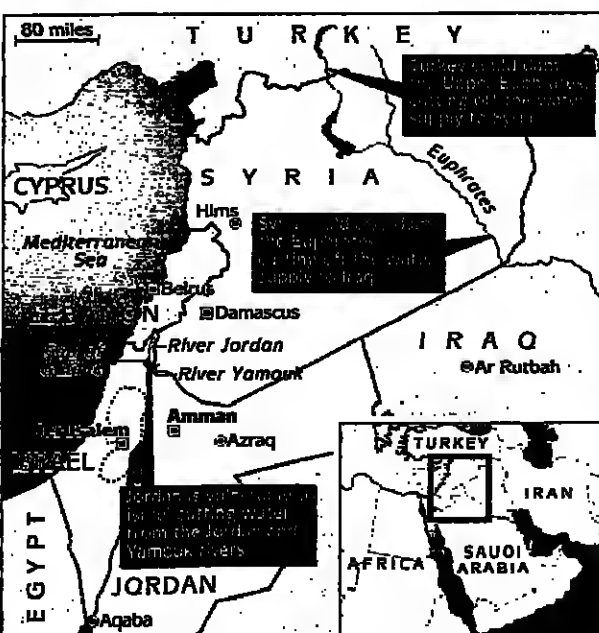
THE WORST drought in 50 years has led Israel to cut the supply of desperately needed water to Jordan, in a move likely to provoke a crisis in relations between the two countries.

The failure of the winter rains - only 40 per cent of normal in Israel - will have a devastating impact on Jordan, which suffered a severe water shortage last year. In Amman, the Jordanian capital, householders found that when they turned on their taps they received only a trickle of grey liquid.

"It is very, very serious," says Gershon Baskin, director of the Israel/Palestine Centre for Research and Information in Jerusalem. "By summer people in Amman may be getting only one or two days' water a week. It is destabilising for the regime."

Israel is pledged by treaty to supply Jordan with 45 million cubic metres of water annually, but has told the Jordanian government that it can only send 40 per cent of this. Israeli farmers have already had their supply cut by a quarter. The hills east of Jerusalem, usually carpeted with grass and wild flowers at this time of year, are as barren as in high summer. The government is expected to declare an official drought in April.

In Jordan the situation is much worse. Its own water re-



sources are limited. In the east Jordan valley, the centre of Jordanian agriculture, one of the main canals has grass growing along its bottom. Last year the filtration plants at the Amman reservoirs stopped working, leading to toxic water flowing into the system.

Mr Baskin, who has studied regional water problems for 20 years, says: "For Israel it is an economic issue; for Jordan it is a survival issue." He says that Jordan might lose half its crops in the east Jordan valley.

Jordan rejected outright the Israeli proposal at the weekend to cut the water supply. Israeli officials are concerned that

the affair may provoke a crisis in relations, especially as the newly crowned King Abdullah will need to show that he can deal with the shortage.

In Israel the government gave the go-ahead earlier in this month for preliminary studies for a desalination plant. Experts argue, however, that the problem could be solved by cutting the subsidies to Israeli agriculture, which takes 60 per cent of the water in Israel but produces only 2 per cent of the gross domestic product.

Countries in the Middle East have long quarrelled about water. Syria is vulnerable to

Turkey damming the waters of the upper Euphrates for irrigation and agricultural schemes. Iraq is also dependent on the waters of the Euphrates, which can be dammed by Syria, and the Tigris, which comes from eastern Turkey.

But Jordan is the most vulnerable country in the region, with few water resources of its own. The oasis at El Azraq, east of Amman, once full of water, is now largely dried mud. In order to cope with the water crisis Jordan has been draining its aquifers at an unsustainable rate.

Such water resources that it does have are at the upper end of the Jordan valley, where the Jordan river and the Yarmouk flow into the Sea of Galilee. Under the 1994 peace treaty between Israel and Jordan the country was to receive extra water from Israel. It is this which is now being cut.

Last year, the first full year when the plan was in operation, Israel met its obligations. But nobody expected such a serious drought this year, and there are no provisions in the treaty about what to do if a water shortage affected the whole region.

As with Israel, most of the water in Jordan is used in agriculture, which consumes 68 per cent of the total supply, while domestic use is only 28 per cent. On the other hand, Amman, with a third of the Jordanian population, is expanding fast and using ever more water.

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Party sees red over Oskar

BY IMRE KARACS
in Berlin

THE LEFT and right wings of the German Social Democrat party united briefly yesterday against their common enemy: Oskar Lafontaine.

As the former finance minister sought peace in Tuscany, his colleagues rounded on him for betraying the trust of the voters. The left wing, which had stood behind Mr Lafontaine throughout his career, felt especially embittered.

Heide Simonis, Prime Minister of Schleswig-Holstein, accused her erstwhile comrade on the left of "letting down all those in the party who had supported him through clenched teeth".

"I was horrified at the way Oskar Lafontaine left," declared the MP Helmut Wieworek, the Social Democrats' defence spokesman. "You can't treat a party which entrusts you with high office this way."

Wilfried Penner, another MP, said a resignation should be a quiet affair and its reasons should be clear. This, he concluded, was not the case with Mr Lafontaine's abrupt departure.

It was still not clear last night whether Chancellor Gerhard Schröder had been able to speak to his disenchanted colleague since last Thursday's resignation, beyond the two words - "not now" - reportedly uttered by Mr Lafontaine on the telephone. Mr Schröder had confessed to a hoaxer, a broadcaster pretending to be President Roman Herzog, that he had not been told of the reasons for the resignation.

As Mr Schröder kept silent, Werner Müller, the Economics Minister, signalled a change in policy by announcing tax reform plans aimed at creating jobs. "The tax reform of 2000 will be a signal for an upswing and investment by business," he told Focus magazine.

Meanwhile, Heiner Flassbeck and Claus Noé, left wingers brought by Mr Lafontaine to the Finance Ministry, were reportedly on their way out, marking the end of Mr Lafontaine's Keynesian experiment.



Delhi slum-dwellers sifting through the remains of their homes yesterday. Fire tore through the shantytown on Sunday killing 28 people. AFP

Chinese premier attacks West over dissidents

ZHU RONGJI, the Chinese Prime Minister, who Western politicians like to do business with, lashed out yesterday at the West's vocal backing for exiled dissidents.

"Don't support those so-called pro-democracy activists," he said. "If these people were to return to China, then there would be no legal system here, no democracy, no rule of law." Mr Zhu, who has a reputation for candour rare among senior Chinese leaders, was speaking at a televised press conference after the closing session of China's annual parliament. The assembly overwhelmingly voted through constitutional changes sanctioning a bigger role for private business and "the rule of law". Afterwards, Mr Zhu pro-

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

posed "no restrictions" on what questions could be asked, though his answers would be disappointing anyone - including exiled dissidents such as Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan - looking for a man willing to break ranks with the party line.

Mr Zhu was clearly irritated by lectures on human rights from visiting Western statesmen. "It seems that without mentioning the question of human rights they would find it difficult to justify themselves when going back," he said. Mr Zhu described how Western politicians often produced lists of names "and say that these are the people who have been arrested, the so-called pro-

democracy activists ... And then I would say, in China we have 1.25 billion people, and every day criminal offences are committed, so every day we are arresting some criminals."

His account of an exchange with the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, this month gave some idea of how such encounters failed to lead to a meeting of minds. "I said to her: 'I started my struggle for the protection and pursuance of human rights much earlier than you did'. And she asked: 'Really?'" Mr Zhu, 80, told the 61-year-old Mrs Albright that when he had been fighting for "democracy, freedom and human rights" against China's former ruling Nationalists, she had still been in middle school. After a year in his job, Mr

Zhu is still a refreshing change from his dour predecessor, Li Peng. He showed off his reading of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, joked about being hugged tight by the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, and airily dismissed US reports that 600 Chinese missiles were targeted at Taiwan. "I don't know that, how could you know it?" he asked rhetorically, and somewhat disingenuously.

Much of Mr Zhu's efforts were devoted to addressing his visit to Washington next month. Allegations that China stole nuclear secrets were part of an "anti-China wave in the US which has caused concern on our side", he said. Mr Zhu predicted a difficult trip. "I don't think my visit to the US will bring me into a minefield,

but I do expect to encounter some hostile or unfriendly atmosphere there," he said. "But I must go there to let you [Americans] vent your anger and your complaints." He said the two countries should restore the momentum for building a strategic partnership.

He dismissed allegations about nuclear espionage by China during the Eighties, saying no evidence had been produced and that China had no need to steal technology. He said those making the accusations "underestimated China's capability to develop and research military technologies. Chinese people are intelligent and diligent people ... China is fully capable of developing any military technology, it is only a matter of time."

Yeltsin publicly rebukes Primakov

BY PHIL REEVES
in Moscow

FEARS THAT Russia faces another round of damaging political upheaval rose last night after Boris Yeltsin summoned his Prime Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, to the hospital where he is being treated and publicly ticked him off.

Mr Yeltsin, sidelined for months by ill-health and waning political clout, must see the premier as the country's de facto leader and decided it was time to bring him to heel. There have been rumours that the President is contemplating sacking Mr Primakov, who took the job six months ago after Russia's currency collapse and a massive debt default. Mr Yeltsin has also met two senior figures - Grigory Yavlinsky and Yegor Stroyev - who were also seen as candidates for prime minister.

Mr Yeltsin, being treated for a bleeding ulcer at the Central Clinic Hospital in Moscow, was televised admonishing Mr Primakov for having poor relations with the media. He said there was "no wedge" in their relationship - and the premier meekly agreed.

Undermining Mr Primakov at a time when Russia needs to convey the impression of stability to the outside world - difficult talks are under way with the International Monetary Fund over more loans - defies logic. But that has rarely governed Mr Yeltsin's political decisions in recent years.

Sacking the Prime Minister, who has irked him by drafting a political agreement with parliament limiting the Kremlin's powers, would cause another political crisis, distracting attention for the harsh economic issues that face the country.

It is unclear whether Mr Yeltsin would go that far. But it is not impossible that his premier, angered by Mr Yeltsin's ticking off may wonder whether he wants to carry on.

A democratic waste of time

STREET LIFE
SAMOTECHNY LANE

RECENTLY I was invited to speak at a college of higher education in Moscow. The director looked visibly nervous when I pushed the lectern aside, sat among the students and asked them what they thought about the future of Russia. A lively discussion ensued.

"Anti-Semitism is a danger. Anybody who incites racial hatred should be prosecuted."

"If this is a real democracy, you should be free to express any opinion you want. And anyway, what's wrong with the idea of Russia for the Russians?"

"Sure, we need a new national idea. We can't go on depending on the West. But hating the Jews is a pretty lousy idea."

The students enjoyed themselves so much that they asked me to "come and give another talk" sometime and several took down my telephone number.

So it was that last week, I received a call from Irina, the young woman who had been searching for a positive national idea. Full of excitement, she asked if I would go and hear her speak at the launch of a "youth parliament". It seemed like a good opportunity to catch more of the Russian student debate.

The venue was the social club of the Moscow Aviation Institute. This college has been a hotbed of anti-Americanism since Washington included it on a blacklist of Russian institutions denied funds because of alleged atomic co-operation with Iran. In this setting, I envisaged a clash of Slavophiles and Westernisers, representatives of the two schools of thought that have vied with each other throughout Russian history.

The students were also expecting verbal fireworks, as they overflowed the 1,500-seat hall. Instead, we were treated to a display of ballroom dancing by girls and army cadets, who swirled against a white backdrop, decorated with an image of a stork building a nest.

"Have I got the right place? I thought this was the youth parliament," I said to the woman next to me. She was wearing a badge, identifying her as an organiser.

"Be patient. There will be a few speeches now. And we will endorse a couple of documents. Then the students will take the floor."

It turned out that the event was organised by Dobro

(Good), a new centrist political movement of those who see the improvement of education as the key to Russian development. The idea of the youth parliament was to raise civic consciousness among the young. Also, I gathered, to give them some alternative to neo-Fascist movements such as Russian National Unity.

Would there be political parties in this mock parliament? No. The young people would develop their ideas in committees covering such subjects as the economy, law reform and ecology. There would be a "council of the wise", or body of grown-ups to make sure debate did not get out of hand.

The Minister of Education was the first of many adult speakers to come on stage and complain of the width of the generation gap, the loss of spirituality in Russia, the drug problem and the lack of respect for the law. As at an old Communist Party congress, the students sat in rows, unable to interject with comments or questions.

Gradually, they got up and left. They were voting with their feet. I followed three girls out into the foyer and discovered they were journalism students. "We had thought we might write about this but it is so dull," said one. "It's just like the *Komsomol* (the now-defunct Communist youth league)."

Irina was pacing up and down in the corridor. A would-be politician, she had an interest in staying, as she was slated to speak when the "New Faces" or selected promising students were finally given access to the microphone. "I'm going to call for tax cuts to stimulate business," she said.

I fear she ended up speaking to an empty hall. To my shame, I did not stay to support her. Two hours into the proceedings, when the adults were still droning on, I left with a group of computer students. They were healthily patriotic, not anti-Western. On the side of the angels, they had been ready to join a "good" youth movement. But they had been bored away.

We parted in an underpass, spray-painted with the swastikas of Russian National Unity. I suspect it will be a long time before the nest-building stork enters the repertoire of the graffiti artist. For many Russian youths, black leather and fascism are still more fun.

HELEN WOMACK

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Holiday mergers book into Europe

News Analysis:
The link-up of
First Choice and
the Swiss group
Kuoni creates a
£1.4bn giant

BY PHILIP THORNTON
Transport Correspondent

THE FRENETIC consolidation of Britain's travel industry took on an entirely new dimension yesterday after a UK tour operator confirmed it was seeking its future in Europe. First Choice and Kuoni Reisen, the Swiss travel group, published the terms of the £1.4bn merger that will create a powerhouse of a business with 7 million customers in 20 countries.

A new UK-based company called Kuoni Holdings plc will be formed to run the combined group, and its shares will be listed in both London and Zurich. Kuoni shareholders will own 53 per cent of the new group with the remainder owned by holders of First Choice shares.

The deal, news of which was leaked out on Budget day last week, marks a fresh stage in a process sparked by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission in 1997 when it gave a clean bill of health to competition within the UK market.

Since that report, Thomas Cook has bought the UK activities of Carlson, the US group, in a deal that creates a £250m-a-year business. The company's Sunworld holiday business has snapped up Flying Colours - which includes the Club 18-30 holiday business - for £50m.

First Choice has bought tour operator Unifjet and upmarket travel company Hayes and Jarvis in a joint deal worth £144m. Thomson Travel has made seven acquisitions since its flotation last May, including Simply Travel and the Polish company, Scan Holiday.

Yesterday's merger marks a departure from the strategy of



Ian Chubb (left) of First Choice, executive chairman of the new group, and Kuoni's Riccardo Gullotti, who will be chief executive. Reuters

previous deals. Rather than pursuing vertical integration between travel agency, tour operators and charter airlines in the UK, the Kuoni/First Choice deal marries a UK high-volume tour operator with an international travel group whose sales operations cover a wide geographical spread. This means the merger is unlikely to encounter opposition from UK or European competition regulators.

Ian Chubb, the chairman of First Choice, told *The Independent*: "The key reason behind this merger is that it creates a company that would be capable of participating in the next round of consolidation

that we believe will occur in the European industry."

He said the merger put First Choice, which had suffered from a small market capitalisation, on a similar ranking to the UK market leaders in terms of size, Thomson Travel and Airtours.

"Our view is that in the UK most of the consolidation that can happen has happened. There are four companies with something like 80 per cent of the market and it is our view, based on experience and advice, that combining any two of those four would end up with serious competition problems."

He said a referral to the MMC would take six months,

while a second-stage European Commission competition inquiry would take another five. "The thought of keeping First Choice hanging about for that length of time is just anathema," said Mr Chubb.

There had been speculation that Airtours, the second-biggest UK operator, might step into the fray and bid for First Choice, which held third place before the Kuoni deal. But it is highly likely that such a deal, which would have created a leviathan with one-third of the UK market, would have been blocked, especially in the wake of Government's decision to launch a wide-ranging inquiry into high-street prices.

First Choice shares fell 14.5p to 175p yesterday as rumours of a rival bid receded.

Mr Chubb said Kuoni Holdings plc would be ideally placed to take advantage of the next wave of consolidation in Europe. "We would have found it very difficult as First Choice to make a big step into Europe, but with the multi-cultural Kuoni team that's easy to achieve and we will have the financial muscle to do it," said Mr Chubb, who becomes executive chairman.

The merged group will be behind Germany's Preussag in Europe, but a leadership battle is not on the cards as profits, not size, is the key, Kuoni said.

Financial figures published by the two companies yesterday showed that First Choice made a pre-tax profit of £50m in the year to October, a 330 per cent rise on £15.4m it made in 1997. Turnover rose about 20 per cent to £1.24bn. Kuoni increased its profits to £62.6m in 1998 from £56.7m on sales up by £460m to £2.25bn.

Kuoni Holdings will include a wide range of businesses. First Choice brings a 250-strong retail network, its tour operation business in the UK, Ireland and Canada and the Air 2000 airline. Kuoni's businesses include premium long-haul holidays, a charter airline and one of the largest Swiss travel agencies.

Other benefits include savings in buying aviation fuel and insurance and making more efficient use of the combined operations' resources. Mr Chubb said it was too early to detail exactly what cost savings would be made through the merger, but he made clear there would be no job cuts among the 11,000 workers.

A major benefit, especially for investors worried by the cyclical nature of the travel business, will be a greater ability to manage seasonal capacity and demand across different geographical markets.

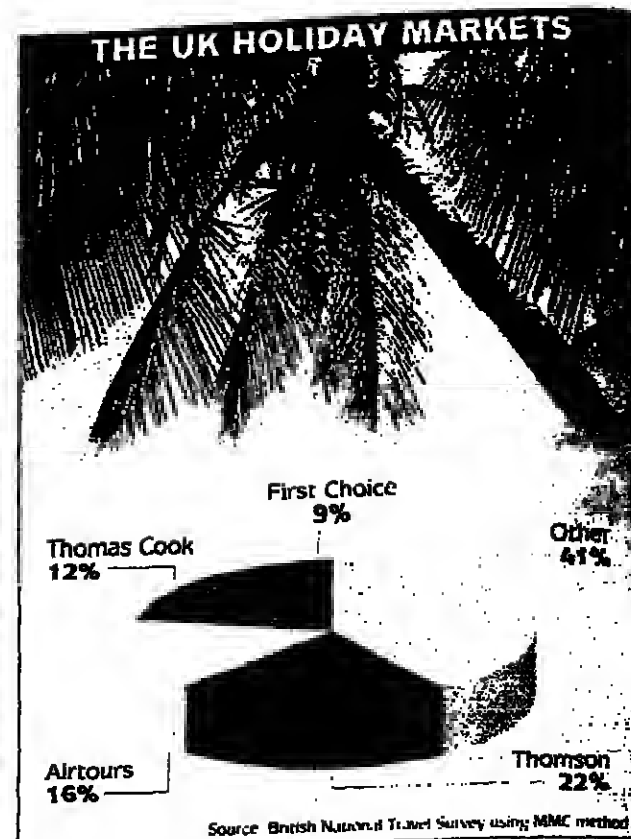
Where this leaves the rest of the UK industry is unclear. The consolidation to date has

been driven by two factors. First, the MMC report opened the floodgates for acquisitions as it hinted that there would be no regulatory problems for further vertical integration other than in the travel insurance business.

But that process has largely been completed and only two independent tour operators with more than 1 per cent market shares remain - Cosmos and Inspirations.

The second factor has been the growing trend towards long-haul holidays at the expense of the traditional package holiday to the Mediterranean. Industry figures show that long-haul holidays have grown by 12.3 per cent over the past four years compared with a 1.1 per cent fall in short-haul.

One industry analyst said: "This is what the First Choice deal is about - putting Kuoni's high-margin premium long-haul business together with the First Choice low-margin package holiday to Majorca."



The two groups said there would be extensive benefits from the merger. Kuoni Holdings will have strong positions in the leisure markets in Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, India, Ireland, Italy and the Far East, as well as in the home markets of the two merger partners.

Other benefits include savings in buying aviation fuel and insurance and making more efficient use of the combined operations' resources. Mr Chubb said it was too early to detail exactly what cost savings would be made through the merger, but he made clear there would be no job cuts among the 11,000 workers.

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Tomkins to hand back further £400m as disposals continue

TOMKINS, the diversified industrial group, yesterday unveiled plans to buy back £400m of its shares and streamline itself further by selling its lawnmower and bicycle division.

The restructuring will leave Tomkins, which is about to fall out of the FTSE 100 index, with total debt of about £600m and three core businesses focusing on the construction, automotive and food sectors.

The buyback will be in the form of a tender offer for 15 per cent of Tomkins's shares priced in a range of 230p to 250p. It follows a series of share repurchases this year totalling £143m. The market gave a lukewarm response to news of the latest buyback, and Tomkins shares fell by 6 pence to 221.5p.

The two businesses being

BY MICHAEL HARRISON
Business Editor

sold are Murray Inc, the US lawnmower, snowblower and bicycle company that Tomkins bought for \$332m 10 years ago, and its UK moving machinery business Hayter, bought for £4m.

Tomkins has decided not to sell the handgun company Smith & Wesson, which together with the two lawnmower businesses makes up its professional, garden and leisure products division. Tomkins said it did not believe a series of legal actions against Smith & Wesson in the US seeking to hold it responsible for "negligent distribution" would go against the company.

Greg Hutchings, Tomkins chairman, said the group looked at several acquisition opportu-



Greg Hutchings: Denies dispute over strategy

nities, including one worth more than \$2bn (£1.35bn) but had decided to hand capital back to shareholders because none of the deals would have generated sufficient returns.

He said Tomkins would still have the resources to undertake bolt-on acquisitions after the buyback, although not on the scale of 1997 when it spent £741m, including the automotive components maker Stant.

The buyback price represents a premium of at least 7 per cent to Tomkins's closing price last Thursday, the day before it announced its intention to launch a tender offer.

Mr Hutchings would not be drawn on whether Tomkins will further pare its portfolio of businesses. Its other brands include Bisto, Hovis, Lyons Cakes and Trico windscreen wipers. He denied that there was discord among board members over group strategy, but said it was being reviewed regularly.

Outlook, page 17

IN BRIEF

Rockware sold for £240m

ARDAGH, the Irish glassmaker, yesterday said its British subsidiary had agreed to buy Rockware, which makes packaging for glass containers, in a deal worth £240m. The deal takes the form of a reverse takeover from Owens-Illinois, which bought the company in 1998 as part of BTR's packaging businesses.

B&B's defence

BRADFORD & BINGLEY will today set out its defence against proposals to demutualise the society. The society faces a vote next month on whether to take steps towards floating and distributing windfall shares to members. John Monks, general secretary of the TUC, yesterday urged members to vote against the proposal to protect jobs.

New mortgage

NATIONWIDE yesterday launched the first mortgage in the country to track European interest rates while lending money in sterling. The mortgage, which carries no exchange rate risk, will be set at 1.75 per cent above the interest rate set by the European Central Bank. In the first year it will offer a 1 per cent discount, giving a starting rate of 3.75 per cent.

Fibernet talks end

FIBERNET, the fibre-optic cable services group, yesterday set it had ended talks about a possible acquisition because they were unlikely to reflect the group's value. The group is still in talks over a possible joint venture.

Terranova dismisses £230m Unigate bid

TERRANOVA FOODS, the fresh foods group demerged from Hillsdown Holdings last year, has rejected a bid from Unigate that would have valued the business at £230m. The late Friday bid was at about 125p a share compared to yesterday's unchanged share price of 104.5p.

The offer was rejected "out of hand" by Terranova. "This approach very significantly undervalued the business and was rejected without further discussion," the company said.

Unigate called off a £1.6bn bid for the whole of Hillsdown last year before it demerged its chilled foods and Fairview Hoxes divisions. Unigate was mainly interested in the chilled

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

foods division, now called Terranova, which makes chilled dressed salads, sandwiches and poultry products under the Buxted chickens brand. It would fit well with Unigate's chilled foods operations, analysts said.

Unigate is unlikely to walk away and is now expected to sound out Terranova's major shareholders. Franklin Resources of the US is the largest with 19 per cent, followed by Phillips & Drew with 14 per cent and Prudential with 11 per cent. It has not ruled out a hostile bid.

Unigate's offer is at a large premium to the 75p Terranova's

shares hit earlier this month. However, it would still be at a relatively low exit multiple of 12. It is thought Terranova would be looking for at least 170p.

Last week Terranova reported its maiden full-year results. Chief executive Terry Stannard repeated the company's commitment to independence. "Without any reference to speculation, we believe we have a super company with management energised by our independent status."

The results showed a fall in operating profits from £27.3m to £25.3m, and the company said trading conditions remained very competitive in Europe. Unigate shares closed 3p lower at 410.5p yesterday.

Morgan Crucible in £170m chemicals sale

MORGAN CRUCIBLE, the industrial ceramics and carbon company, yesterday confirmed it was in talks to sell its chemical products business, the biggest part of a rationalisation caused by a slump in orders, writes Andrew Verity.

The group is this week expected to announce it is selling the division for £170m to Illinois

Tool Works of the US to address a profit fall that led to a 30 per cent share plunge in January. Graham Swetman, finance director, said: "We are in discussions with a potential buyer about the chemicals division in line with what we said about our new strategy earlier this year."

Morgan warned in January that it expected full-year prof-

its to be at least 15 per cent below expectations owing to weakening customer demand.

The chemical products division suffered last year from cuts in production by Boeing, one of its largest customers. A strike at General Motors and de-stocking by microchip makers also affected sales.

Ian Norris, Morgan's new

chief executive, foreshadowed the sale when he announced the result of a strategy review earlier this year. He said the Windsor-based group, a world leader in five of its specialist materials, would now focus on ceramics and carbon. Further disposals are expected, and analysts urged the company to use proceeds for an acquisition.

Net users get ready to count their beenz

A BRITISH Internet start-up company will today attempt to steal a march on larger rivals when it unveils a new virtual money, which it hopes will become the dominant currency of the World Wide Web, writes Peter Thal Larsen.

The currency unit, called beenz, comprises electronic credits that Internet users can save and spend as they surf. They cannot be exchanged into real money.

Companies will be able to offer beenz to lure visitors to sites or encourage them to fill in questionnaires about themselves. Users will then be able to trade in the credits at other sites in return for discounts on

products or access to certain types of information.

The credits are issued by The Beenz Company, a one-year-old company that is the brainchild of Charles Cohen, a former Liberal Democrat speechwriter. The firm, which has raised several million dollars in funding from investors in the US and UK, has also gained the backing of US technology giants Oracle and Sun Microsystems.

Philip Lettis, chief executive of Beenz, said the time was ripe for the idea. "The one thing that is missing from the Internet is a currency," he said. "Merchants have to find some way of exchanging value."

Japanese boost for Psion

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

PSION, the hand-held computer maker, received a welcome boost yesterday when Symbian, its software joint venture, signed a wide-ranging agreement with the Japanese mobile phone giant NTT DoCoMo to develop mobile telecommunication devices and services.

The deal is the first that Symbian has announced since it was created last summer through Psion injecting its EPOC operating system software into a joint venture with mobile phone manufacturers Motorola, Ericsson and Nokia. Symbian and NTT DoCoMo said the alliance would define specifications to provide complete end-to-end solutions for the Japanese market. The partnership is expected to develop network solutions and services as well as hand-held communication devices.

The deal is a breakthrough for Symbian, which has come in for intense criticism recently for failing to sign new licences for EPOC. Japan is expected to be a key market.

Shares in Psion, which has a 33 per cent shareholding in Symbian, closed up 106p for 860p.

The European Index-Tracking PEP

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Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	46.02m (27.54m)	27.5p (22.5p)	10.0p (-)	28.03.99	19.04.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	26.0m (24.74m)	6.0p (4.57p)	2.5p (-)	07.06.99	17.06.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	1.422m (4.222m)	2.74p (1.13p)	0.0p (-)	07.07.99	17.07.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	67.11m (22.27m)	44.4p (35.5p)	10.50p (10.0p)	18.06.99	17.06.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	40.22m (117.77m)	8.0p (40.0p)	5.50p (4.50p)	18.06.99	17.06.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	-7.41m (2.90m)	-29.0p (10.47p)	-	-	-			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	-2.25m (4.222m)	-46.11p (7.11p)	-	-	-			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	1.05m (1.05m)	1.4p (0.5p)	-	-	-			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	154.0m (132.2m)	20.54p (18.5p)	4.70p (-)	14.05.99	12.04.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	7.94m (4.61m)	14.5p (10.5p)	26.50p (25.75p)	01.04.99	22.03.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	33.16m (23.18m)	2.54p (1.5p)	4.70p (-)	01.06.99	22.03.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	33.16m (23.18m)	2.54p (1.5p)	4.70p (-)	01.06.99	22.03.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	44.44m (22.27m)	30.5p (21.7p)	7.25p (-)	26.05.99	22.03.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	55.57m (26.57m)	1.3p (1.2p)	1.7p (0.8p)	-	-			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	1.05m (1.05m)	0.000m (-)	0.21p (-)	-	-			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	1.48m (0.65m)	8.4p (6.5p)	1.97p (-)	26.04.99	22.03.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	0.411m (0.33m)	6.10p (6.47p)	0.0p (-)	22.05.99	22.03.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	2.71m (6.51m)	19.5p (8.7p)	6.10p (6.10p)	04.06.99	22.03.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	1.53m (1.99m)	18.5p (18.5p)	8.50p (8.50p)	04.06.99	22.03.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	30.64m (7.11m)	24.1p (28.5p)	16.5p (16.5p)	18.05.99	17.05.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	2.12m (2.57m)	-0.03p (4.05p)	-	-	-			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	80.33m (19.41m)	11.07p (8.5p)	5.10p (4.50p)	30.05.99	01.06.99			
Barrat's (Q)	49.08m (26.57m)	47.63m (22.27m)	8.40p (6.10p)	6.50p (6.50p)	26.05.99	22.03.99			

(*) - Profit (N) - Net Profit (M) - Net Margin (S) - Before Exceptional Items *Adjusted for non-recurring operations

THE INDEPENDENT
Tuesday 16 March 1999

Europe

OF UK HOLIDAY MARKETS



Gallic empire-building with Nissan

AT FIRST GLANCE, the Fr26bn Renault plans to fork out for a stake in Japan's second-biggest and seriously ailing car company looks like something Papa should definitely not be contemplating. Nissan has lost the route map after riding into the worst Japanese recession since the war, and comes not with a dowry but with £13bn of interest-bearing debt, a legacy of its headlong expansion in the 1980s. If Nicole is looking for a partner, she can surely do better than this.

But then, there is more than a hint of empire-building about the Gallic move. Not so long ago, the French viewed Britain as little more than a "Japanese aircraft carrier" moored off Europe's north-west coast, because it was home to three transplant factories including Nissan's Sunderland plant.

How sweet now to be riding to the rescue as the good ship Nissan lists alarmingly under the weight of its debts and its flagging range of models. Renault can magnanimously present the deal as an alliance of equals, and the French government, which still owns 44 per cent of the shares, can even donate a *soupeçon* of its residual stake to Nissan as a sign of good faith.



OUTLOOK

If a means can be found of keeping Nissan's debts away from the Renault balance sheet (and with the French state as co-driver all things are possible) then the industrial logic too looks more compelling. Nissan gives Renault an entrée into the US, Japan, and the first sector, where it has no presence at all, as well as a head start in the development of efficient, environmentally friendly engine technology.

Renault, meanwhile, is an object lesson for Nissan in how to design cars and then plan their introduction. In the Espace and the Scenic, the French have led the way in creating the only two genuinely new market segments of the last 15 years. The

two manufacturers' model ranges may compete within Europe but, crucially, there is virtually no overlap in manufacturing capacity, which spares them from the destructive and distracting task of closing plants and laying off workers.

Tomkins

GREG HUTCHINGS, chairman of Tomkins, was in resigned mood yesterday as he prepared for his company's exit from the FTSE 100 share index. According to analysts, Tomkins will make pre-tax profits this year of around £500m. None of the four newcomers joining the index make anything like that amount, and one of them, Easys, makes no money at all. Mr Hutchings knows as well as anyone that the stock market values companies by reference to their perceived future prospects, not their past, but even so, this must seem a trifle perverse.

For many years, Mr Hutchings, a Lord Hanson protégé, did terribly well for his shareholders. Following in the maestro's footsteps, he built a many-faceted conglomerate out of businesses in mature, cash-generative industries. Even

after conglomerates turned unfashionable, he stuck to his guns, insisting that, fundamentally, all businesses were the same - the only thing that separates one from another, in his view, is good and bad management.

The turning point for his share price was the acquisition of Ranks Hovis McDougall. The age of the conglomerate was not quite over, but even then hardly anyone, apart from Mr Hutchings, believed it made any sense to combine food manufacturing with automotive and construction components, Smith & Wesson guns, bicycles and lawnmowers. As it happens, the "guns to guns" combine, as Tomkins rudely became known in the press, has been as good as its word, and in a difficult market, it has managed to increase margins and profits at Ranks quite markedly.

Not that this has done Mr Hutchings any good. It is not just conglomerates that are unfashionable; Tomkins is also in some deeply unfashionable businesses too, cash-generative though they might be. Mr Hutchings has struggled to find a way forward, but the big acquisition he needed to fuel earnings and growth has failed to come his way.

Now he's being forced to fall back on a course of action he always vowed to resist - share buy-ins. Even for him, it's a no-brainer with the share price as low as this; few acquisitions could ever promise to be as earnings-enhancing.

Since the last figures, Tomkins has bought back more than 5 per cent of its shares; a tender offer for a further 15 per cent is now planned. However, the offer has been pitched at such a miserable level that unless the share price continues to shrink, few shareholders are going to want to avail themselves of it.

Mr Hutchings has had a good innings. It may be unfair and unjust to say it, but Tomkins is a company that looks to have had its time. A more radical break-up than the one proposed is called for. Everyting else has been tried; separating the company for disposal or merger into its three core constituent parts looks to be about the only option left that might be worth pursuing.

Russian bonds

THE RETURNS once available on Russian GKO bonds - fabulous -

might have been enough to make even the most naive of investors suspicious, but that sort of thing has never stood between the trader and his destiny, and once they got to hear about it, foreign bankers piled in like there was no tomorrow.

When Russia finally and inevitably defaulted last summer, foreigners were left holding around \$400m worth of the wretched things. Ever since, they have been desperately trying to salvage something from the wreckage. Now CSFB has come up with a plan that offers a ray of hope - though not much of one.

Russia's total external debt stands at about \$100bn. It has around \$20bn in foreign currency reserves. The national budget plans for payment of only about half the interest due this year. Fresh inflows of private capital, which had been helping the government to keep up payments, have shrunk from \$15bn a year to zero. The economy is contracting, lower oil prices are cutting into export earnings, and the government's already poor ability to collect taxes has deteriorated to the point of near collapse.

The bottom line is that foreign creditors are not going to get much

of their money back - even if, as rumoured, a new deal with the IMF is close. Small wonder, then, that the banks on the negotiating committee have differed over tactics. Deutsche Bank, which formerly chaired the committee, was generally condemned when it accepted terms that offered a mere 5 cents in the dollar, maximum.

Deutsche was nevertheless followed by Chase and Credit Lyonnais. CSFB has now struck out on its own with a proposed debt-for-assets swap, inviting other investors to join it. The plan comes with a stiff success fee of course; this is investment banking, after all.

Even so, CSFB expects the return on its new fund to be higher than the 5 cents on offer from the Russian government. Given Russia's fundamental inability to repay its debts, the asset swap approach may be the right one. Russia's vast oil reserves provide a ready source of dollar-denominated earnings, which might be earmarked for investors. Still, they would be wise not to count on it. The basic arithmetic, combined with the country's unstable political and social situation, does not leave much room for optimism.

Eurotunnel profits may yield early dividend

EUROTUNNEL yesterday

raised hopes among its long-suffering shareholders that it could start paying a dividend earlier than planned after reporting its first bottom-line profit.

The Channel Tunnel operator made a net profit of £25m last year after realising a one-off £270m gain following the completion of its mammoth debt restructuring.

Even at the operating level Eurotunnel comfortably beat its own targets, recording a £184m profit - a three-fold increase on 1997, and a 50 per cent improvement on the forecast contained in its debt restructuring prospectus. Underlying losses, after interest, fell from \$611m in 1997 to £215m.

On the current schedule Eurotunnel is not due to start paying its 730,000 shareholders a dividend until 2006. But Georges-Christian Chazot, the group managing director, said yesterday: "Our objective is to

bring that date forward. I would not like to make a forecast but we are working towards that goal."

Patrick Ponsolle, the chairman of the Anglo-French group, pledged that operating profits this year would at least meet the prospectus forecast of £205m to £210m.

But with traffic levels up 12 per cent already this year and a 20 per cent increase in car shuttle prices taking effect in the summer, analysts expect Eurotunnel to beat that target, even if duty-free sales are abolished in July.

Eurotunnel also announced plans to cut its interest payments further by offering to redeem early £950m of equity notes that it exchanged for borrowings last year as part of the restructuring of its £28bn debt mountain.

The equity notes pay inter-



Eurotunnel may bring forward its planned first dividend, but chairman Patrick Ponsolle was 20 minutes late for yesterday's results in London after his Eurostar train was delayed by a broken rail

est at 4.45 per cent. If all £465 million notes are redeemed early, then Eurotunnel will save £40m on its annual interest bill.

The notes are due to be redeemed for shares on a one-for-one basis by January 2004. But they have been trading at a significant discount to their underlying value since they were issued. Eurotunnel is now offering to exchange them on the basis of 1.3 notes for one new share.

Turnover rose by 26 per cent

last year to more than \$670m as Eurotunnel increased its share of the Dover-Calais cross-channel market, capturing 52 per cent of all car passengers and 37 per cent of freight business.

Income from its shuttle services was 87 per cent higher at £210m, while the Eurostar passenger service linking London Paris and Brussels and the through-freight business brought in £215m. Retailing, including duty-free, brought in £195m.

Flying Flowers chairman goes

FLYING FLOWERS, the troubled

mail-order plants company, yesterday announced the departure of its chairman, Walter Goldsmith, and three other directors as part of a radical boardroom shake-up.

Mr Goldsmith, a former director-general of the Institute of Directors, is to leave in spite of calling the prospect of his resignation "an absurd proposition" at the end of last year.

He will be replaced as chairman by Robert Norbury, a former chairman of investment banking at NatWest Markets, the defunct investment arm of the high street bank.

Tom Walker, company secretary and a director for seven years, will retire along with two non-executive directors, Kevin Morley and Ian Steven. The changes will take place at the company's next agn.

Flying Flowers saw its market value plummet last summer as its shares fell from 600p to 150p. The plunge followed two profits warnings in the space of two months. The shares rose yesterday from 215p to 217.5p.

Behind the warnings were tumbling response rates to newspaper adverts for Gardening Direct, the key driver of Flying Flowers' growth. Flying Flowers admitted it also failed to manage the business properly during the summer months.

Paul Fraser, one of the biggest shareholders in the group, saw the paper value of his stake fall by 25 p.p. After the two profits warnings, he joined the company to share the chief executive post with the company's founder, Tim Dunningham.

dismisses Alcatel bid

EUROTUNNEL yesterday raised hopes among its long-suffering shareholders that it could start paying a dividend earlier than planned after reporting its first bottom-line profit.

Rhodia tipped to enter battle for Albright with £470m bid

RHODIA, the French chemical

group, is this week expected to enter the takeover battle for Albright & Wilson, its troubled UK rival, by trumping a £400m cash offer from Albemarle of the US with a bid of around £470m.

Industry sources said Rhodia's top executives were last night finalising details of its offer with its bankers, and an announcement could come as early as today.

The sources said Rhodia, advised by NM Rothschild and Warburg Dillon Read, was likely to pitch its cash counterbid at around 150p per share, a 13 per cent premium to Albemarle's 130p offer. A&W shares closed 2.5p down at 140p.

The Paris-based group, majority-owned by the French

drug company Rhone-Poulenc, is hoping that the counter-offer will be enough to sway Phillips & Drew, A&W's largest shareholder. The fund manager, which has a stake of about 24 per cent, last week refused to accept Albemarle's offer despite a recommendation from A&W, where Paul Rocheleau is chief executive.

P&D believes that the US group is not paying enough for A&W, a leading producer of chemicals for detergents and carbonated drinks with yearly sales of over £215m.

The company's sales and share price have been hit hard by the downturn in chemical markets and the strength of sterling, and a number of

shareholders and analysts consider Albemarle's offer too low.

P&D's stance was followed by M&G, which has a stake of over 5 per cent. However, Albemarle secured the support of Mercury Asset Management,

the UK group's third-largest investor with a 12 per cent stake.

A bid by Rhodia, which last year had sales of over 5.5bn euros (£3.3bn), would not surprise City analysts. The French company has been seen as a possible bidder for A&W since last week when it revealed that it had held preliminary talks with the British company.

Industry experts believe that a link between Rhodia and A&W would yield greater cost savings as both companies produce phosphates for the cleaning and drinks industries.

A Rhodia counteroffer could open the way for other bids, with the US group FMC and a private UK company backed by venture capitalist CVC tipped as potential bidders.



Paul Rocheleau, chief executive of A&W

New England banks in \$16bn merger

THE CONSOLIDATION of the

American banking industry, which reached fever pitch in 1998 with a tide of giant mergers, may be picking up again with news that two of New England's largest names, BankBoston and Fleet Financial, are to combine in a deal worth \$16bn.

The merger will create the eighth largest bank in the US and a powerhouse in the country's north-east. However, the process of fusing the two banks will mean the loss of more than

4,500 jobs, partly because of the elimination of overlapping branches. The city of Boston will feel the brunt of the changes.

Analysts, many of whom had been predicting a sale of BankBoston, perhaps to a foreign bank, saw sense in the agreement.

"These banks should definitely do much better on a combined basis than stand-alone," commented Diana

Yates of AG Edwards. "They don't have to compete with each other."

Fleet has grown quickly recently, acquiring, for example, the former US retail banking business of National Westminster. It also brings with it the discount brokerage Quick & Reilly.

BankBoston boasts a wide network of retail banks as well as the investment firm, BankBoston Robertson Stephens. It also has a big presence in Argentina and Brazil.

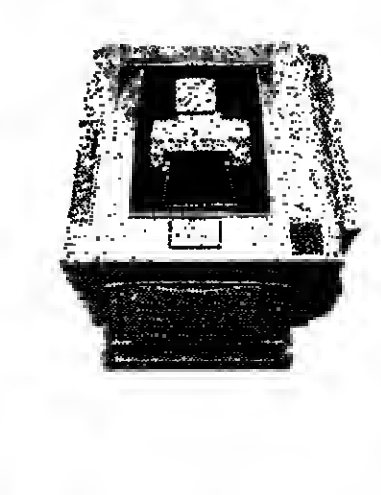
The deal, which is scheduled

to close by year-end, is certain to come under the microscope of anti-trust watchdogs in Washington. To appease concern, the two banks are expected to shed some \$13bn in customers' deposits.

The early response yesterday on Wall Street was lukewarm. Shares in Fleet were off slightly in morning trading while those in BankBoston were up only slightly. They remained well below the \$33 share value put on the bank by the deal.


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Veba's great escape upsets Footsie's day

THE GERMANS killed any hopes of the market ringing up gains. From the opening bell equities were in retreat, unsettled by the sale by Veba, the German utility of its 10.2 per cent stake in Cable & Wireless. Telecoms led the retreat, with Footsie ending 75.4 points off at 6,206.8. At one time it was down 122.8.

C&W tumbled 79.5p to 751p. Telewest Communications 20.5p to 243.5p, and Colt Telecom 51p to 839p. BT dropped 26.5p to 1,058p.

In their hurry to unload the C&W interest, the Germans accepted a 724.2p-a-share deal from ABN Amro, NM Rothschild and Cazenove. The trio went on to place the shares at 735p. With C&W closing at 830.5p on Friday, institutions found the yawning discount irresistible and clamoured to buy the 246 million shares.

Just why Veba was prepared to sell at a price so far below Friday's close is something of a mystery. Certainly it set alarm bells ringing, rousing nagging fears that the first crack had appeared in the



DEREK PAIN

of 185p a share was mooted. In a variation on the buyout bandwagon, some, up to 80p, seems likely to sell its fabrics business to management for around £850,000 and become a cash shell called Tarpan.

Fibernet, although ending talks with possible bidders, firmed up to 447.5p and SCI Entertainment ended 22p higher at 81.5p, although the company said it knew of no reason for the advance.

Terranova, the foods group, held at 104.5p despite rejecting an offer of 125p (thought to be from Unigate), and volatile Tracker Network added another 70p to 580p following Friday's management buyout statement.

First Choice, the holidays group, fell 14.5p to 179p after agreeing a merger with Künli of Switzerland. Talk of a possible German counter-offer from Pressing continues to be heard. There were vague re-

RICHARD THOMPSON, whose business career has included chairing the struggling first division football club Queens Park Rangers, has become chairman of Whitchurch. He intends to take the former food group into the film and television industries.

He is buying the food operations - largely meat processing and pet-food businesses - for £6.5m. The shares held at 32p. As a food group Whitchurch has struggled; its shares were 65p four years ago.

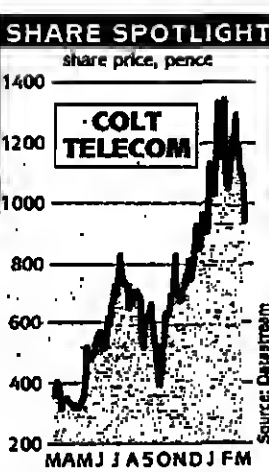
seemingly unstoppable telecoms charge. The sale also created doubts about C&W's prospects, with the Germans displaying an apparent lack of faith in the telecoms giant.

It also destroyed most of the day's planned trading. Institutions were left short of cash. They had to find around £1.8bn with settlement due at the end of the week for their C&W shares, so cash they had provisionally earmarked for any other buying operations had to be transferred to their C&W coffers. Few would want to sell shares for special early delivery because of the extra charges involved. Much better, therefore, to put all available resources behind their bids in the C&W auction and delay any buying plans.

With C&W's share turnover a massive £28.8 million, the day's volume almost touched 15 billion, one of the highest on record.

With so much attention centred on C&W the rest of the market played an almost inaudible second fiddle. The supporting indices lost their enthusiasm. The mid cap's remarkable 15-day winning streak came to an abrupt end with a 41.9 fall to 5,518.9; the small cap slipped 1.2 to 3,366.6.

The small cap is still being influenced by management buyouts. Housebuilder Cala jumped 50p to 157.5p as a bid



COLT TELECOM

results, recovered some lost ground, up 25.5p to 325.5p. PowerGen, ahead of analyst meetings this week, rose 13p to 883p. Supermarkets, ruffled in recent weeks by the alleged price war, perked up on hopes that the Office of Fair Trading report will be less draconian than expected.

Enterprise Oil had a shaky time, off 38.25p to 303p. The market is uneasy about the possibility of the planned union with Lameco failing to materialise. The sale of 12 million shares by Mercury Asset Management, part of Merrill Lynch, increased the doubt factor.

HW, a recruitment group, followed Corporate Services with a profits warning and fell 37.5p to 82.5p; SuperScape, an IT group, dropped 41p to 149p on a warning.

Queens Moat Houses, once seemingly destined for the corporate graveyard, was little changed at 28.5p after Merrill Lynch upgraded its advice to accumulate. The ending of the hotel chain's interest payment holiday will lower profits over the next two years

PETRA DIAMONDS, with interests in Angola, held at 71.5p. Seymour Pierce has become the group's stockbroker, replacing IA Pritchard, which appears to have abandoned its corporate operations.

Petra now has Gold Fields of South Africa as a shareholder. In exchange for shares, it acquired the diamond interests of Gold Fields, which cover rights over 10 properties in South Africa. Petra shares topped 150p last summer; they were floated at 30p by IA Pritchard.

but "good management is progressively improving the structure and position of the company".

Viridian, the former Northern Ireland Electricity, was little changed at 693.5p as Warburg Dillon Read increased its target price by 50p to 800p. Shire Pharmaceuticals, after Friday's profits surge, rose 43p to 516.5p, and pub chain JD Wetherspoon frothed a further 15.5p to 273p on its results.

BATM Advanced Communications jumped 32p to 286p ahead of a presentation at stockbroker Shore Capital. Highbury House Communications joined the Internet party, climbing 4p to 17.25p. The company has launched a joint venture to explore various Internet publishing initiatives.

Oxford Biomedica, a gene-therapy group, rose 9p to 27p, apparently on indications that Colin Blackburn had acquired shares. He gained a reputation as a small company investor with AroraScan, a recent success. The shares have climbed from 1.75p in September to 17.5p (up 0.5p) after being revamped. He claims Oxford, raising cash through a rights issue, has nine promising products in development.

SEAQ VOLUME: 1.49bn
SEAQ TRADING: 94.310
GILT INDEX: 115.23 - 0.05

Tough markets set to slow Laporte down

LAPORTE, the specialty chemicals group, yesterday hinted at a slowdown in its record-breaking growth in 1998, with profits set to be hit by tough markets and a flurry of one-off charges.

The company, whose chemicals are used in toothpaste, paints and condoms, said the abolition of advance corporation tax, last year's sale of its hygiene division and starting a continued strength would wipe around 5 per cent, or £5m, from this year's profits.

The chief executive, Jim Leng, said that 1999 would be a "tough year" after a three-year unbroken run of record profits, earnings and margins. He warned that the company's problems could be compounded by difficult conditions in Far Eastern markets. "For the coming year, we expect no assistance from external factors or from the major economies in which we operate," he said.

However, Mr Leng claimed that the radical restructuring of the past three years - which transformed Laporte into a focused specialty chemicals business and caused the loss of almost 2,000 jobs - would see the company through 1999. Profits growth should pick up again in 2000.

Mr Leng's comments came as Laporte beat City expectations with a 1 per cent advance in 1998 pre-tax profits to £134m on

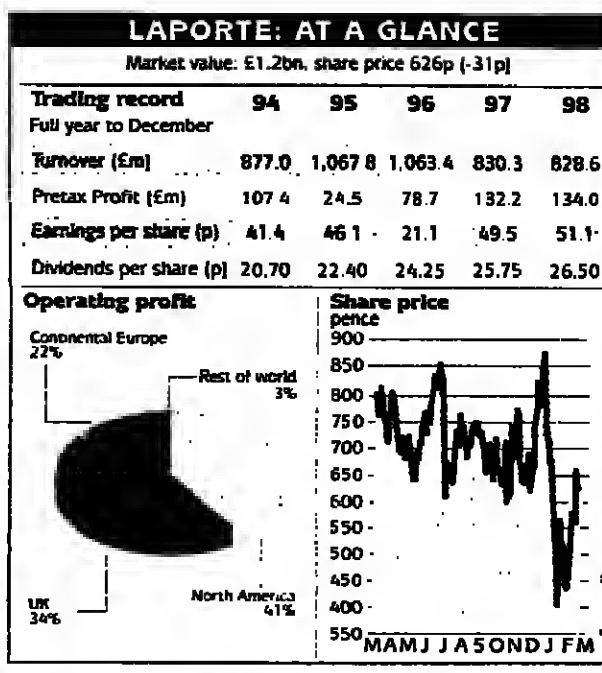
turnover up by 2 per cent to £710.4m. The results received an £16.1m boost from inspection, the UK specialty chemicals company bought last year for £600m.

The four-month contribution from inspection led to a near-doubling in profits at Laporte's specialty organics business. Strong growth in the division - which makes chemicals for medicines such as Nurofen and the anti-impotence drug Viagra - offset a profit decline in the electronics business, which was hit hard by a slump in the market for semiconductors.

City analysts said the results proved that Mr Leng's three-year strategy of selling underperforming subsidiaries while moving away from cut-throat commodity markets was paying off. The key to Laporte's success is its strong margins, which last year rose to 18.7 per cent from 11.4 per cent in 1997.

While many of its UK peers were wrongfooted by a sharp downturn in global markets, Laporte has weathered the storm, thanks to its exposure to high-margin industries. Producing sophisticated chemicals for pharmaceuticals and life sciences companies pays more than churning out commodity products, and Laporte's margins are among the best in Europe.

Continued growth in the spe-



LAPORTE: AT A GLANCE

Trading record	94	95	96	97	98
Full year to December					
Turnover (£m)	677.0	1,067.8	1,063.4	830.3	828.6
Pre-tax Profit (£m)	107.4	24.5	78.7	132.2	134.0
Earnings per share (p)	41.4	46.1	21.1	49.5	51.1
Dividends per share (p)	20.70	22.40	24.25	25.75	26.50
Operating profit					
Continental Europe	27%				
Rest of world	3%				
UK	34%				
North America	61%				
Share price					
900					
850					
800					
750					
700					
650					
600					
550					
500					
450					
400					
350					
300					
250					
200					
150					
100					
50					
0					

First profit fall clips Fairey's wings

FAIREY, the electronics group, disappointed yesterday by reporting its first fall in profits in its 10-year history and warning that recovery is not likely until the end of the year.

Shares in Fairey fell 30.5p to 283.5p as it posted underlying pre-tax profits of £30.5m, down 40 per cent on comparable figures for the previous year.

John Poultier, Fairey chief executive, said the drop was largely the result of the slump in the semiconductor market, which was hit by overcapacity. Fairey's semiconductor businesses, accounting for 15 per cent of total revenues, saw sales drop by 35 per cent and profits disappear.

Fairey also suffered from the effects of the Asian economic crisis. Sales to the Asia-Pacific region fell by 24 per cent, while

the knock-on effects hit demand in the company's main market, the United States. "US companies saw exports going down and import substitution going up," said Mr Poultier.

Fairey has cut 329 workers, 11 per cent of its workforce, a move likely to yield annual savings of £9m. However, Mr Poultier pointed out that a recovery in profits depended heavily on a recovery in the semiconductor industry.

Fairey is confident that, with the growing use of chips in everything from mobile phones to cars, recovery will take place. "Organic growth in this industry is only a matter of time," said divisional director Hans Nilsson.

However, analysts were cautious, pointing out that Fairey's



John Poultier: Chip sales slump hit Fairey profits

relatively short order books made it hard to predict the timing of a recovery. Charterhouse analyst Michael Blogg has pencilled in full-year profits of £35m. "The last thing they want

to do is to make positive noises and find that a recovery is delayed," he said.

However, with shares trading on a multiple of less than 12 times forward earnings, they look cheap. Analysts point to Fairey's strong market position, as reflected in gross profit margins of around 50 per cent.

This raises the prospect that a larger group could pounce before the shares have a chance to recover. Obvious predators include US giants Emerson Electric and Honeywell, which would be likely to extract cost savings.

Either way, Fairey shares look unlikely to fall much further. "For a company of this quality they are a steal," said Mr Blogg. "But people are going to be wary until they see some evidence of a recovery."

In a league of his own

IT WILL be quite an adjustment for Allan MacDonald, going from managing director of British Aerospace's interests in Asia and Africa to being chief executive of Celtic, the famous Glasgow football club.

A lifelong Celtic fan, Mr MacDonald said yesterday: "It is a great honour and responsibility to be given the opportunity to represent an institution of Celtic's stature."

Celtic has just fought off two unsolicited bids from a group headed by Kenny Dalglish and Jim Kerr (of Simple Minds fame), and its current chairman and managing director, Fergus McCann, is reducing his involvement.

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

telecommunications. He joined British Biotech from BT, where he was finance director of the personal communications division.

Mr Fallon submitted his resignation at a board meeting yesterday, so the board accepted it and issued an announcement. They have appointed Tony Weir, currently British Biotech's company secretary and finance director of the pharmaceutical subsidiary, to succeed Mr Fallon.

The legal row between the company and its former head of clinical trials, Andrew Miller, is set to reach court this summer. British Biotech is suing Dr Miller for talking to shareholders about drugs trials without board approval, while Dr Miller is counter-



Capital gain

STEVE VINSON, a native of Alabama, is leaving his current job as head of risk at Daiwa Securities in New York to cross the pond to London, to do an equivalent job for Barclays Capital.

Mr Vinson will report to Robert Diamond, chief executive, in this newly created role. Mike O'Neill, a California, arrives later this month to head up the Barclays group.

mood yesterday after announcing the chemicals company's respectable annual figures. "Everything you need to take on holidays contains Laporte chemicals," he explained to bemused reporters.

For instance, OralB toothpaste, cough medicine, condoms and Nivea cream for sunburn all contain Laporte ingredients, he said.

And if the holiday is flagging a bit, the company also supplies a vital ingredient for Viagra to Pfizer, the impotency drug's manufacturer.

A cut too far

WE ALL want Government departments to operate as efficiently as possible, but the Inland Revenue might have cut costs just a bit too aggressively over last week's Budget.

It sent out a hefty batch of Budget press releases to us with just a 26p stamp on it. The package thumped onto our desks a total of three days late, and with "Underpaid - Surcharge Fee to Pay: 67p"

Bovis runs rule over merger candidates

BOVIS HOMES, the house-builder spun off from transport group P&O a year ago, is considering a merger with a listed rival in a bid to expand its presence in the North of England.

The chief executive, Malcolm Harris, yesterday said the company had held informal talks with several medium-sized housebuilders in the past year but had still not found the perfect partner. "We have spent the last year talking to a number of companies, but we will only merge if it added value for shareholders in the long term."

Mr Harris said Bovis wanted an agreed merger and was not prepared to mount a hostile bid. If a friendly link-up did not materialise, Bovis could spend its £100m cash pile to buy an unquoted regional house-builder.

The ideal target would have operations in the Midlands, the North and the South-west to complement Bovis's strength in the South, the chief executive said.

The company's hand in any merger talks was strengthened by yesterday's good maiden results. Bovis posted a 21 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £45m despite a 10 per cent fall in completions to 2,303. Tight cost control and a rise in selling prices pushed up margins to 19.3 per cent from 15.4 per cent in 1997.

The results boosted Bovis shares, which rose by 12p to 273.5p, highest since their 200p flotation.

Mr Harris predicted strong growth in the housing market this year. He said buyers were enjoying the "best market conditions for 25 years" with falling interest rates and rising personal earnings.

Mark Hake, building analyst at Merrill Lynch, said Bovis's four-year landmark - one of the industry's longest - would help it exploit the turnaround in the market. The landmark would limit the risk of a sharp fall in margins, boosting the stock's defensive qualities.

Mr Hake rates the shares, on around eight times 1999 forecast earnings of £5.1m, a "buy", noting that despite yesterday's rise they are still at a 10 per cent discount to the sector.

Stepping down

THE SQUARE MILE was on tenterhooks last night to find out what big new media and leisure job Keith Harris is about to take, after he said that he is stepping aside as chief executive of HSBC Investment Bank after only five years at the bank.

Mr Harris will continue to use his contacts to refer work to HSBC. His responsibilities for corporate finance will be taken over by Didier Stoessel, his current deputy, who joined HSBC in 1997 after a long spell at Merrill Lynch.

Mr Harris's other merchant banking departments will report directly to Stephen Green, chairman of HSBC Investment Bank.

E-mail: j.willcock@indpendent.co.uk

Country	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
UK	1.0000	0.6172	0.6177	0.6748
Australia	2.5844	2.5674	2.5667	1.5852
Canada	20.388	20.375	20.359	1.5852
France	65.765	65.651	65.625	1.5852
Germany	2.4770	2.4761	2.4752	1.5852
Italy	1.0112	1.0093	1.0093	1.5852
Japan	1.0000	0.9747	0.9747	1.5852
Netherlands	8.8093	8.7903	8.7889	1.5852
Spain	2.7116	2.7116	2.7116	1.5852
Sweden	2.7116	2.7116	2.7116	1.5852
Switzerland	2.7116	2.7116	2.7116	1.5852
US	1.0000	0.6172	0.6177	0.6748

Country	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
UK	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
Europe Central Bank	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
US Federal Reserve	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
Japan Bank of Japan	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
Canada Bank of Canada	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
France Banque de France	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
Germany Bundesbank	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
Italy Banca d'Italia	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
Spain Banco de España	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
Sweden Riksbank	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
Switzerland SNB	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%
US Fed Funds	5.50%	5.25%	5.25%	3.15%

LIFE FINANCIAL FUTURES										
Contract		Settlement	High	Low	Est. Best Bid/Ask	Open Interest				
Long Gilt	Mar-99	116.09	116.15	116.09	111.00	5600.00				
5 Yr Gilt	Mar-99	108.20				83.00				
German Bund	Jun-99	115.77								
Italian Bond	Jun-99	111.67								
Japan Govt Bond	Jun-99	130.50	130.50	130.50	118.00					
5 Mth Sterling	Mar-99	94.57	94.57	94.56	16696.00	156137.00				
3 Mth Sterling	Mar-99	94.62	94.63	94.61	32054.00	177597.00				
5 Mth Euro	Mar-99	96.96	96.97	96.95	6434.00	125840.00				
3 Mth Euro	Jun-99	97.02	97.02	97.02	6390.00	11072.00				
5 Mth Euro	Jun-99	97.09	97.09	97.08	46457.00	168027.00				
3 Mth Euro	Jun-99	97.72	97.72	97.72						
5 Mth Euro	Jun-99	98.72	98.71	98.68	22650.00	147468.00				
3 Mth Euro	Jun-99	98.61	98.68	98.57	19506.00	74303.00				
5 Mth Euro	Jun-99	98.56	98.56	98.56	10558.00	114454.00				
3 Mth Euro	Jun-99	97.02	97.02	97.02						
5 Mth Euro	Jun-99	97.09	97.09	97.08	10828.00	66440.00				
3 Mth Euro	Jun-99	97.72	97.72	97.72	47200.00	140638.00				
FTSE 100	Mar-99	6199.00	6305.00	6162.00						
Settlement Price: \$206.50										
LIFE FTSE 100 INDEX OPTION										
Strike	Call	Put	Int	Put	Int	Call	Put	Int	Call	Put
6150	92	27	40	25	222	154	314	295	-1	-1
6160	90	21	16	22	285	167	285	275	550	511
6170	86	22	88	25	199	167	251	277	-5	-1
6180	18	22	124	30	135	224	221	300		
ENERGY All Europe										

Austra progre

1551

SPORT

Football: The French capital has a magnificent stadium that hosted the World Cup final but no team to call it home Paris searches for team to support

JOHN LICHFIELD

HERE is a tale of two cities. The first has six top-flight football clubs, including one which has no home stadium. The second has two magnificent stadiums but only one First Division club. Next season it may have none.

Football in the English capital is booming, with French immigrants – Wenger, Petit, Vieira, Anelka, Desailly, Leboeuf and Gnani – leading the way. Football in the French capital, the capital of the world champions, is falling, as ever.

On Wednesday of last week, however, something strange happened: something which has not happened for more than 40 years. There were two big football matches in Paris on the same night.

Paris St-Germain, the wealthiest club in France, the 13th wealthiest club in the world, scrambled a 0-0 draw before 40,000 people at the Parc des Princes. The result was greeted by local fans, players and press as a turning point. Some of the highly paid stars in red and blue seemed to have grown backbones, ending a sequence of jellyfish-like performances which had reduced their perennially under-achieving club to the shame of an end-of-season relegation struggle.

At the same time, at the magnificent Stade de France, just north of Paris proper in St-Denis, the second club in greater Paris, Red Star, were losing 2-1 to the resurgent French "club of the 70s", St-Etienne. Despite a defeat which brought relegation to the national league (in effect the Third Division) a step closer, this match – the first league game held in the new stadium – was hailed as a breakthrough by the Red Star management.

The attendance, 45,000, was the highest ever in a French Second Division game. It would, Red Star argued, restore their status as the leading candidate to fill the embarrassing and expensive vacancy for a "resident club" at the stadium where France won the World Cup (and the Welsh rugby union side recently became the first country to defeat any French team).

As often in the long, bumbling history of Parisian football, both turning points may prove to be illusory – square passes rather than shots on goal.

Within three days of that 0-0 triumph, PSG had fired their coach, for the second time this season. To lose one coach in modern football is normal, to lose two in a season is laughable.

Alain Giresse, the former international midfielder, was dismissed as their coach in October for failing to challenge for the title with his team of international stars (Marco Simone



The French government has been trying for months to find a club that will move into the Stade de France, the newest and most spectacular stadium in Europe. Despite being the wealthiest club in France Paris St-Germain have found themselves in a relegation battle and the strain shows. (left) on Milad Madar, the former Everton striker

from Italy, "Jay-Jay" Okocha from Nigeria, Christian Wörns from Germany). For good measure, PSG also fired their president.

The new coach, Artur Jorge from Portugal, began well but since the winter break PSG have not won a game. In recent matches, he packed the team with defenders and de-

fensive midfielders, but still lost by two or three goals.

The nadir came last Saturday when PSG lost 2-0 to Montpellier in the League Cup, ending their last chance of appearing in Europe next season. On Monday a mob of PSG fans invaded the club's training ground, the Camp des Loges in the

Paris suburbs, and hurled a couple of tear-gas grenades before being ejected. "You make us cry every Saturday," they seemed to be saying. "Now it's your turn."

The incident provoked a player revolt, led by the former international, and former West Ham goalkeeper, Bernard Lama. He accused the imported stars, especially the team captain, Simone, of exaggerating injuries and being interested only in their next contract. Lama described Simone as a "Milan reserve" and a "diva". That is "diva", not "diver". He presumably meant that Simone was an overweight, overpaid Italian, who constantly bleats about the cruel fates which have marooned him in a failing football club.

On Saturday, Jorge was fired and

replaced by his deputy, Philippe Bergeret. PSG are five points clear of the relegation zone with eight games remaining. Several of their rivals have games in hand. The Second Division beckons unless Bergeret, part of Aimé Jacquet's coaching team at the World Cup, can rebuild the team's morale, starting with a difficult visit to Auxerre on Saturday.

What is wrong with PSG? They had a brief purple patch in the early 1990s; they won both the French Cup and League Cup last year. But the club – created in 1971 to provide a resident club for the Parc des Princes, heavily subsidised by the city of Paris, owned by the pay-TV company Canal Plus – has always lacked history, roots and soul.

Thanks to the television connection, money to buy good players

is no object but the effect is always like cut flowers stuck into sand: the team blooms for a while and rapidly fades.

Manchester United fans may take this as further evidence of the dangers of being owned by a TV company. But the PSG malaise precedes Canal Plus ownership. It seems to be almost spiritual.

Paris, unlike Manchester or London or Rome – unlike Marseilles or Bordeaux – is not a football city. The support for PSG, averaging more than 40,000 a game, is surprisingly loyal, mostly middle class, mostly white. There has actually been a slight increase in gates this season (as there has, to record levels, in France as a whole, thanks to the World Cup victory).

In Paris, however, you never have

the sense that the city lives and breathes its football club (or clubs) as do the people of Manchester or London or Milan or Marseilles. Parisians are more likely to be talking about movies or food or sex or shoes. As the American singer Tom Waits, once observed: "Paris just isn't a man's town".

What hope then of manufacturing a second Paris top-flight club to occupy the Stade de France? (PSG refused to move because they would have lost their subsidies from Paris town hall). The consortium which runs the stadium gets £7m compensation from the government for every year that there is no resident football club playing there. For months, the French government has been desperate to find, or create, a club big enough to occupy the newest and loveliest stadium in Europe.

Red Star seemed once to be the certain choice. But their president is now under investigation for fraud; they have slumped to the bottom of the Second Division; and their fan base is no more than 4,000 to 5,000. The 45,000 who saw Wednesday's "experimental" game were mostly St-Etienne fans and locals taking advantage of cheap ticket prices to watch a game – any game – in an already mythical stadium.

And now Red Star have a serious rival – Olympique Noisy-le-Sec 93, a local Third Division club. Noisy-le-Sec is not one of the great names of European football. It is a measure of the sports ministry's desperation that its candidature is being taken increasingly seriously: as if Brentford were being encouraged to give up Griffin Park and set up home at Wembley.

The club's director, Jamel Sandjakt, is of North African origin. He believes that Noisy-le-Sec can become the team of the Paris suburbs: in other words the club to tap the talent and the support of tens of thousands of Zidane and Anelka "wannabes", the football-mad, African and Arab-origin kids of the banlieue, who mostly despise PSG.

Several large companies have promised to invest in Noisy, if they move to the Stade. There is a problem, however. In the background lurks Sandjakt's friend, Bernard Tapie, the disgraced former businessman and politician and former match-fixing owner of Olympique Marseilles.

The possibility of Red Star and Noisy sharing the Stade de France has also been mooted. No rapid solution is likely, unless...

Surely, London has one football club too many. With the rocky road to Dublin barred, could Sam Hamman not be persuaded to move Wimbledon to the Stade de France? Paris St-Germain once had a team in the Rugby Super League (another PSG failure). Why not Paris-Stade de France (the club formerly known as Wimbledon) playing in the Premiership?

Australian fads are bad for progress of England backs



ALAN WATKINS

IN THE last few weeks I have received several letters from England rugby union supporters claiming I am less than generous to the national side. Some write in sorrow, some in anger, some in amused tolerance. All are united in their conviction that I am not wholly fair to the team as it has developed under Clive Woodward.

I believe what Woodward says about wanting to develop a new kind of rugby, play a 15-man game, compete effectively with the southern hemisphere – though countries from that half of the globe, New Zealand in particular, have no hesitation in playing 10-, nine-, or even eight-man rugby when it suits their purposes so to do.

This, indeed, is the criticism of England's two wins so far this season: that, when the going gets rough, the English forwards stuff the ball up their jumpers and wait for their strength, and the passage of time, to convey them to the line. Or, as Dr Johnson observed of Gulliver's Travels: "When once you have thought of big men and little men, it is very easy to do all the rest."

To be fair to Woodward, he is less obsessed with size than both his predecessors. Geoff Cooke refused to pick Neil Back regularly because he thought he was too small, though he added – which cannot have been of much consolation to Back – that this

was not the poor lad's fault. Jack Rowell picked a backrow of three No 8s, then Ben Clarke on the open side.

Woodward, by contrast, has selected the Leicester flanker consistently and preferred a back row of three No 7s, for Lawrence Dallaglio has often played in that position. He has also had the bright idea, so far abundantly justified, of playing Tim Rodber, formerly a No 6 or 8, in the second row.

There remains some doubt how good the England forwards really are. Two years ago, when their composition was only slightly different, it was confidently asserted that they would take most of the places in the Lions' pack. In the event the Test team fielded two Irishmen and a Scotsman in the front row and an Irishman as principal jumper. Scott Quinnell of Wales and maybe Eric

Miller of Ireland, too, would have been in the back row had they not been impeded by injury.

Would the story be very different today? I shall reserve my selection of a Lions XV to a later column, after the Five Nations has finished.

In any case, a pack cannot be judged by the number that will be promoted to another, superior lot of forwards. They form a unit. That is why, if I were Woodward, I would take a chance on the entire Leicester pack, apart from retaining Rodber in the second row and playing Dallaglio at No 6. This would be harsh for Jason Leonard and Richard Hill, but I do not suppose for a moment that Woodward will make the experiment.

There is something else. In the second half of the Scotland match, about 20 metres out and in front of the Scottish posts, the England scrum were wheeled three or four times – unless, of course, they were doing the wheeling in which case the move was equally pointless.

Yet it is unfair to blame England's forwards for the distinct lack of sparkle that has been apparent this season. Tyrone Bracken is such a live wire that he is in danger of giving electric shocks to all those in his immediate vicinity, including his own side. I wish he would concentrate more on his primary duty – to give a long, accurate pass to his outside-

half – instead of going off immediately on frolics of his own.

But to whom is Bracken going to make this service available? That is the perennial English question. Paul Grayson is out, injured, for the rest of the season. I assume Woodward will choose Mike Catt in his place and leave Jonny Wilkinson settled at inside centre. Outside him, in Jeremy Guscott, England have perhaps their greatest centre of the post-war period, rivalled only by Jeff Butterfield, Lewis Cannel and David Duckham. The aim should be to get the ball quickly to Guscott in the most propitious circumstances for him.

It will not be achieved if the outside-half lies flat, eyeball to eyeball with the opposition. Grayson was praised everywhere when he played in this way before Christmas. I cannot understand why. Neil Jenkins played similarly for Wales in the first two lost matches but reverted to an older style in Paris.

In even older times coaches would compel their outside-half and three-quarters to stand at an angle of 30 degrees to the touchline. This was absurd. But the modern fad for playing flat is equally if not more so. It is a fashion as foolish as the one for kicking to touch instead of going for goal, having a scrum or taking a tap penalty. Woodward acquired an obsession with lying flat after a sojourn in Australia. He should now get rid of it.

SPORT ON THE INTERNET

ANDY OLDFIELD

THERE COMES a time in the season, say about a week before their team is due to play in whatever the League Cup is called these days, when fans feel more than the usual need to bone up on the opposition. One way is to hang out in pubs frequented by rival supporters, but for Spurs and Leicester fans anticipating Sunday's Worthington Cup final at Wembley, the Web is a safer place for spying.

Leicester City's official Website does everything that fans have come to expect from official sites. There is a chat room to give fans an opportunity to air their views. There are authoritative news reports, more information about tickets and different membership schemes, video clips of the season's highlights, free live Web radio commentary on match days, merchandise and links to a building society so you can save up for your next season ticket.

It also advertises job vacancies at Filbert Street. Last week they were looking for a retail sales assistant. Even if they lose on Sunday, Martin O'Neill's job will probably not be advertised online.

The Spurs official site does a similar job and looks good. No jobs, though. No chat area either, which makes it feel as though it is a channel for disseminating official information rather than a forum for discussion. The media watch section provides official club responses to articles in the press so that "supporters are not misled by uninformed speculation".

The club offers Internet accounts, with software in club



titled Forfossake. It has the feel of a fanzine, albeit a high quality one.

Official sites shy away from inviting joke and cartoon submissions about the foibles of local rivals. Judging by the cartoon here about Derby fans, this is probably wise. There's a lot of hard facts and stats, as well as scurrilous humour.

Both camps seem optimistic about their chances of picking up the silverware on Sunday. To get the bookies perspective 'The Sporting Life Betting Shop' is the place to see what odds are being offered. Access to the latest prices is gained by following the soccer and Worthington Cup links from the main page.

Those who want to forget the exits of their own clubs had better stay away from the Worthington Cup 1998-1999 page, where all the results so far are tabulated. This site will become a no-go area for either Leicester or Spurs fans in the near future.

SITE ADDRESSES

- Leicester City Official Website
<http://www.lcfc.co.uk/>
- Spurs Official Website
<http://www.spurs.co.uk/>
- Tottenham Hotspur Unofficial Homepage
<http://www.thuh.com/>
- Forfossake
<http://www.forfossake.com/>
- Sporting Life Betting Shop
<http://www.sporting-life.com/sub/30808011=2316/betting/>
- Worthington Cup 1998-1999
http://sunsite.tut.fi/ree/riku/soccer_data/cup_eng98.html

CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL

Istabraq the heavyweight champion

JP McManus called at Ballydoyle recently to ask if it would be at all possible, if you didn't mind, to have a quick look at his horse Istabraq. No, was the reply, from the gelding's trainer, Aidan O'Brien. And, you know, JP didn't mind one bit.

"Aidan told me the horse was having his midday nap," the great punting owner told *The Independent*. "We could go and have a cup of tea, but we had to leave him alone for an hour and a half. But the horse wasn't to be disturbed."

Even for a racehorse, Istabraq is a funny creature. He wakes up at a exactly the same time each morning and does exactly the same amount of routine work along exactly the

BY RICHARD EDMONDSON
Racing Correspondent

same route. He jumps only one hurdle at home all year. He is virtually institutionalised.

It has to be this way with the seven-year-old because, like many brilliant athletes, he is on the verge of being bonkers. "He can go in an instant," O'Brien says.

When you take Istabraq away from the comfort of accustomed surroundings he starts to panic. At the Cheltenham Festival 12 months ago he sweated profusely before his race. The previous year he was even worse and you could have filled a cistern with the creamy perspiration that dripped from

his body. The bad news for those who will attempt to wrest the Champion Hurdle crown from Istabraq at 3.15 this afternoon is that on both those occasions the horse won. His running more than made up for any mental fragility.

And Istabraq has changed this year. His mind seems clearer, his body is different too. We associate the champion with the sleek lines of the Flat horse he was bred to be, but now there is substance to him. "He's a small-looking horse but he's very deceiving," O'Brien says. "He's almost 16.1 (hands high). He has a different look about him now. He's just getting stronger and stronger."

"He's very straightforward

and a clean-winded horse and as he gets older he takes his work easier and that gives him a good chance. His races have been a lot easier this year than last."

It is a wonder to understand

RICHARD EDMONDSON
Nap: Step On Eyre
(Cheltenham 3.55)
NB: Ebullient Equiname
(Cheltenham 5.05)

from where O'Brien gets this last belief - Istabraq has not had a race this season. He has had four canter which just happen to have been conducted in the form of a race at the track. The trainer himself ad-

mits his horse's latest Leopardstown victory was incorporated into the schedule as a piece of fine-tuning. This is a cataclysmic thought for the 13 who dare take him on this afternoon. (Of the 17 which opposed last season only his stablemate Theatreworld and Bellator, a 66-1 chance, have the nerve to try again.)

Foremost among the challengers is French Holly, who was runner-up to Istabraq at Leopardstown in January. That result was a rare creature: a one-length annihilation.

French Holly had previously proved he was Britain's best protagonist in the Christmas Hurdle at Kempton. Like Istabraq he is both sired by a Clas-

sic Flat horse (the pair are by Sadler's Wells and Sir Ivor respectively) and a former winner of the Royal & Sun Alliance Hurdle, a contest he won by 14 lengths last year.

Indeed, if Istabraq was not around, connections of French Holly could quite sensibly see several seasons at the top over timber for their horse. As it is though, the behemoth who looks as though he should be kept in a hangar rather than a box may be forced to go over fences if he is humiliated again today.

Theatreworld must also be a place consideration as he has been runner-up for the last two years. He usually plods along all season with a prep-

aration culminating in success at Gowran Park. This time he did not win in Co Kilkenny, but then he did not have his ears pushed off either.

After that in the betting lists we are down to the likes of Lady Cricket, who would need to set off at daybreak to be given a chance. It was a struggle for her to win a three-runner, sports-day race at Fontwell last time. The rest have little chance on any known earth form.

It appears the Champion Hurdle is about to be returned to its glory years, when it was an uplifting contest dominated by multiple winners. Night Nurse, Monksfield and Sea Piggo were dual victors of the Seventies and early Eighties,

but in recent years the perennial winner is no longer a feature. See you then was the last horse to follow up in completing his hat-trick in 1987.

Istabraq is now a bigger horse, both in physique and achievement, as we embark on the Cheltenham Festival of 1999. He seeks to emulate Monksfield, who was the last dual Irish winner in 1978 and 1979, and there is no cogent argument which suggests he is not up to the assignment.

Racing people are not able to say this very many times at the Festival, but this year, in the last Champion Hurdle of the millennium, we can say it about Istabraq (3.15). He cannot be beaten.



Ice warriors: Jamie Osborne puts the final touches to the preparation of his Cheltenham hope Lord Of The River over a frosty fence in Lambourn

David Ashdown

£200 credit available today.*

(Would you credit it?)

SMURFIT CHAMPION HURDLE	
TV Live on CH 4, 2m 21 Cheltenham 3.15pm	
1/2 Istabraq	40/1 Bellator
9/2 French Holly	40/1 City Hall
10/1 Theatreworld	40/1 Zafarabad
18/1 Lady Cricket	50/1 Midnight Legend
20/1 Blowing Wind	50/1 Tutchev
33/1 Grey Shot	66/1 Mister Morose
33/1 Nomadic	66/1 Upgrade

EW one-quarter the odds a place 1,2,3.

These prices may have changed since this newspaper was printed.

For the very latest prices, page Ladbrokes Teletext 8656 (Ch4).

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Ladbrokes

For a bet, Ladbrokes are favourite.

The Fly can make up for my missing year

Jamie Osborne, who joins our team for the Festival, gives a jockey's view of the most important week of the season



and highly charged. I have seen men in tears, I have seen them fighting, and I have seen them beside themselves with the euphoria of winning. There is nothing else like it.

Riding a winner at Cheltenham is one of the greatest thrills in the sport. This year I have a solid book of rides to help me achieve that goal. Barry Hills and Ian Balding are trainers more readily associated with Royal Ascot but they provide me with my first two rides.

Barry Hills and I teamed up in 1993 to win the Stayers' Hurdle with Nomadic Way and this year we have a realistic chance of adding to that victory with The Fly. While he has only jumped once in public when winning a novices' event at Newbury in February, his style of hurdling is quick and accurate and he certainly doesn't lack any enthusiasm. I am confident that given normal luck in running he can outclass a strong Irish challenge.

Ian Balding's Grey Shot would prefer to be running on firmer ground than we will experience today but he still holds

a realistic chance of finishing in the frame. It is hard to see anything beating last year's winner, Istabraq, but the race for the places is wide open.

Kadon Nomadic has sensibly side-stepped tomorrow's Royal & Sun Alliance Novices' Chase, leaving me free to partner Lord Of The River in that race, the staying-novice chasers' championship. Kadon Nomadic instead runs in today's William Hill Handicap Chase and I believe that his hold front-running style will create trouble for the opposition and he can make all to win.

Today's rides are completed by Ebullient Equiname in the Stakhs Casios Final, Nicky Henderson's charge holds solid claims in a race in which the winner will not be easy to find.

For me, this year's Cheltenham is more significant than any other. I had competed every season since 1986 until last year when I was forced, through injury, to miss out for the first time.

Last year was not exactly a great one for me and Cheltenham was the low point. I re-

member standing reluctantly at the edge of the paddock trying to sound cheerful and enthusiastic in front of the Racing Channel cameras, while inside I was experiencing the flip side of Cheltenham euphoria.

My left hand, injured in a fall five months before, was still cold, deformed and rigid. I was on police bail, having been arrested in January at the start of the cack-handed Metropolitan Police investigation into racing. I was convinced that everyone around me was certain I was guilty. I doubted if I would ever ride again, and worst of all my mother had just boltlocked me for being scruffy. I felt that I had lost the ability to achieve the changes which would get me back in the middle of the paddock, rather than on its edge.

Today, 12 months later, I can smile at these memories and be thankful that I will be back in the place which I was afraid I had left for good. My hand is back to normal, and the police investigation exonerated me. But last year's experience made me realise the power that Cheltenham has to heighten the senses and magnify emotions. I may have entered the winner's enclosure a dozen times in other years, but to do it again this week would mean more to me than at any other time.

Jamie Osborne will carry the logo of *The Independent* on his breeches and collar throughout the Cheltenham Festival

BIG-RACE FIELD	
3.15 CHAMPION HURDLE (CLASS A) (Grade 1) £240,000 added 2m 110yds £139,200	C4
1 BELLATOR (7) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: P. Doolan; Trainer: Mrs V. Williams Form: Stayed on at one pace to finish 2 lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) after losing a lead of 10m to Istabraq in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 124	
2 BLOWING WIND (7) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: P. Doolan; Trainer: Mrs V. Williams Form: Ran on one pace when 1 1/2 lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 123	
3 CITY HALL (8) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: Mrs R. H. & Mrs V. Williams; Trainer: Mrs V. Williams Form: Stayed on well when 1 1/2 lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 125	
4 FRENCH HOLLY (5) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: K. P. Doolan; Trainer: F. Murphy Form: Led well when 1 1/2 lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 141	
5 GREY SHOT (10) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: R. H. & Mrs V. Williams; Trainer: Mrs V. Williams Form: Led well when 1 1/2 lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 123	
6 ISTABRAQ (8) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: J. P. Doolan; Trainer: A. P. O'Brien Form: Came out well when 1 1/2 lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 149	
7 MIDNIGHT LEGEND (10) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: Mrs H. J. Doolan; Trainer: D. Nicholson Form: Finished strongly when 2 1/2 lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 114	
8 MISTER MOROSE (8) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: Mrs J. Doolan; Trainer: N. Twiston-Davies Form: Unseated rider at one pace when 1 1/2 lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 124	
9 NOMADIC (8) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: D. P. Doolan; Trainer: M. Macdonald Form: Led well when 1 1/2 lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 126	
10 THEATREWORLD (8) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: Mrs J. Doolan; Trainer: A. P. O'Brien Form: Stayed on to finish three lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 132	
11 TUTCHEV (8) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: Mrs J. Doolan; Trainer: D. Nicholson Form: Stayed on to finish three lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 118	
12 UPGRADE (10) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: Mrs J. Doolan; Trainer: N. Twiston-Davies Form: Stayed on to finish three lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 108	
13 ZAFARABAD (8) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: Mrs J. Doolan; Trainer: D. Nicholson Form: Stayed on to finish three lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 130	
14 LADY CRICKET (22) (B) 5yo 12st Owner: D. P. Doolan; Trainer: M. Macdonald Form: Stayed on to finish three lengths behind in the Select Hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft) a length ahead of Bellator who won off the pace. The weekly flat in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m, soft). Summary: Useful handicapper who came good in the spring but was out of the Grand National meeting at Aintree. However needs further run on and the class to make an impact at the Festival. Going: Distance: Jumping: Rating: 129	

10-YEAR-TALE ON THE CHAMPION HURDLE	
1989	90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98
Place of the favourite:	7 4 1 6 3 2 28 2 P 1
Winner's place in betting:	0 2 1 3 2 0 0 0 1
Starting prices:	50-1 95-40 4-1 6-1 13-2 9-1 11-2 8-1 7-1 3-1
Winners' ages:	7 8 7 8 7 6 6 6 6 6
Profit or loss to £1 stake:	Favourites -£100 Second Favourites +£107
Percentage of winners placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in last race:	100
Shortest-priced winner:	Kribben (1990) 85-40
Longest-priced winner:	Beach Road (1989) 50-1
Top trainers:	M. P. Doolan - Granville Again (1983), Make A Stand (1997)
G. Balding - Beach Road (1989), Morley Street (1989)	
Top jockeys:	No jockey has won this race more than once in the past 10 years

JP 21/03/99

er, at the odds, I'm not

telling you anything worth knowing.

The rest of the card is very difficult. The races are extremely open and the favourites should start at fair prices as the on-course layers will be keen to get them all in the book.

HYPERION'S

TV TIPS

in top form, but **GRIS D'ESTRIVAUX** bold-jumping win at Newbury 10 days ago was highly impressive. His Song is a solid alternative to the younger brigade.

AND

GUIDE

3.55: Island Chief seemed unsettled by Haydock's drop-fences last time out but, if regaining his usual assured jumping technique, is very handily weighted here. Macgeorge has been laid out for this prize. But the progressive **STEP ON EYRE**, unbeaten this season, can carry the famous Arkle colours to

W WEATHER

Tomorrow: Another warm and sunny day after a cold start.

Thursday: Cold but dry start followed by sunny spells. Possibility of rain late in the afternoon.

SHOW

CHELTENHAM 3.55

	C	H	L	S	T
Step On Fire	9-2	4-1	3-2	4-1	3-2
Kayote Homenaje	6-1	9-2	5-1	13-2	6-1
Infected Child	8-1	9-1	10-1	9-1	8-1
Rainbow Harvest	6-1	10-2	9-1	9-1	10-1
Calvary	9-1	9-1	10-1	9-1	11-1
College Wild	12-1	10-1	9-1	12-1	2-1
Straw Connections	8-1	12-1	12-1	11-1	9-1
Justice	12-1	14-1	14-1	14-1	14-1
Centurion	15-1	19-1	18-1	19-1	18-1
Buty's Boy	8-1	20-1	20-1	20-1	5-1
King Lucifer	6-1	20-1	21-1	6-1	14-1
Macguyver	20-1	21-1	6-1	6-1	14-1
Unpainted Man	20-1	21-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Nation's Land	22-1	25-1	25-1	25-1	25-1
Five Thyme	9-1	30-1	30-1	21-1	21-1
Imaginary	30-1	31-1	31-1	20-1	21-1

Shore Party	40-1	33-1	38-1	40-1	33-1
Down Shoreward	33-1	50-1	40-1	33-1	40-1

Each-way, a quarter the odds; places 1, 2, 3, 4

CHELTENHAM 4.30						
	C	H	L	S	T	
Clinton	8-1	5-2	8-1	8-1	7-1	
Lindsey's Lasso	2-1	5-2	8-1	8-1	8-1	
Scottish Green	8-1	8-1	8-1	8-1	7-1	
Wandering Light	8-1	14-1	3-1	13-1	8-1	
Time For A Ride	12-1	14-1	2-1	11-1	15-1	
All At Once	14-1	16-1	2-1	14-1	14-1	
Cats On Target	16-1	14-1	18-1	18-1	16-1	
Highland Red	16-1	14-1	16-1	16-1	16-1	
Shammy	14-1	16-1	14-1	14-1	14-1	

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Top 10 Years	18-1	18-1	18-1	18-1	18-1	18-1
In Youth	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Strong Champions	18-1	20-1	18-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Current List	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Outgoing's Date	25-1	19-1	25-1	25-1	25-1	25-1
Club's Gift	25-1	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Flare	25-1	25-1	18-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Private Island	20-1	25-1	25-1	20-1	25-1	25-1
Strongest List	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1	25-1	25-1
Transit	20-1	25-1	25-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Hayes	20-1	20-1	25-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Shawcross	33-1	20-1	40-1	25-1	33-1	33-1
There's Not What	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1	33-1	33-1
Chapman's Hill	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1
Yorkshire Engineers	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1

Each ring a quarter the odds, please 1, 2, 2, 4

CHELTENHAM 5.05					
	C	H	L	S	T
Gallop Home	7.2	2.1	9.0	4.1	4.1
Three Furlongs	0.1	0.4	0.1	9.1	0.2
Stomach Up	10.1	10.4	9.1	10.1	9.1
Stomach Gate	0.1	10.1	10.1	10.4	10.4
Greenacres	0.1	0.1	0.1	11.1	10.1
King's Blenheim	10.1	12.4	10.1	10.4	10.4
Flying Colours	14.1	12.1	14.4	14.4	15.1
Misty Maid	12.1	10.1	14.1	10.1	10.1
The Irish Red	14.1	12.1	14.1	12.1	10.1
Papa Rumbold	15.1	14.1	15.1	20.1	14.1
Phantom	10.1	20.1	20.1	0.1	20.1
Earl Epsom	20.1	20.1	20.1	20.1	20.1
Murphy	10.1	20.1	10.1	0.1	20.1

Yankees	20-1	25-1	20-1	23-1	25-1
Good Lord Miffler	20-1	25-1	22-1	25-1	25-1
Wildcats	30-1	39-1	33-1	33-1	33-1
Just Youth	20-1	33-1	33-1	33-1	40-1
Albino Horse	50-1	50-1	50-1	40-1	50-1
Sweet Wilcox	40-1	40-1	50-1	40-1	50-1
Shawn Giffen	40-1	40-1	50-1	45-1	40-1
Harvard Island	30-1	50-1	50-1	50-1	60-1
Amusement Flight	50-1	50-1	60-1	50-1	60-1
Jellies	50-1	60-1	50-1	50-1	50-1
Global Predator	230-1	230-1	230-1	230-1	400-1

Each way a quarter the odds, places 1, 2, 3, 4

SPORT

PARIS IN NEED OF A MATCH P21 • LARA LIFTS WEST INDIES P23

Inter still riven by self-doubt

MANCHESTER UNITED'S chances of progressing to the semi-final of the European Cup appeared to improve yesterday as self-doubt emerged within the ranks of their quarter-final opponents Internazionale, and fresh concerns arose over the fitness of the Italian side's Brazilian striker, Ronaldo.

Perhaps most worrying for Mircea Lucescu's side, as they seek to overcome the 2-0 deficit they picked up in the quarter-final first leg at Old Trafford a fortnight ago, were the comments made by one of their own players, Paulo Sousa.

"We're lacking a game plan," the Portuguese midfielder said. "No one knows which movements to make and that's very serious at our level. It's not enough to send 11 players on to the pitch and say to them: 'play'. No one knows what the others are doing."

Paulo Sousa added that his

FOOTBALL

BY NICK HARRIS

side will need to show a marked improvement on their 2-2 draw in the Milan derby at the weekend to stand any chance of stalling the ambitions of Alex Ferguson's side. "If we repeat our derby performance, we are certain to lose against Manchester United," he said.

Paulo Sousa did not play in the derby and has been out of action for most of the season through injury and lack of form, but may be recalled to Lucescu's side against United.

Inter are banking on Ronaldo's return to take them past Ferguson's men and into their first European Cup semi-final in 18 years, but Paulo Sousa said that even the Brazilian's presence was unlikely to be enough to inspire his side. "We are all happy that Ronaldo is

back," the Portuguese playmaker added, "but he alone can not put us in the semi-final."

Whether Ronaldo will actually play much of a role tomorrow remains to be seen. He suffered a headache yesterday that was severe enough to keep him from training.

"Ronaldo didn't train with his team-mates because he felt poorly," an Inter spokesman said. "He had a headache and didn't sleep well last night."

Although it is unlikely that the Brazilian's problem will keep him from the starting line-up in San Siro, any news of further problems for the Inter player will worry his side.

Ronaldo played only 45 minutes in Saturday's 2-2 derby against Milan, his first start in Serie A since 17 January. Although the knee tendinitis problems that plagued his World Cup last summer may be on the mend, he still appears to be some way from match fit. If he starts, as expected, alongside Chile's Ivan Zamorano, it is not clear how long he will last.

"I'm not at 100 per cent and everyone knows it," Ronaldo said. "But I'm getting better and I feel good. I don't know how many minutes I'll play on Wednesday but I'll give my all. This is the match of the year."

Ronaldo added, ominously in light of Paulo Sousa's comments: "I need the best Inter possible behind me. A squad that believes in itself from start to finish."

Inter are without a win in their last eight games, including the 2-0 first-leg defeat in Manchester two weeks ago. The six defeats and two draws in that sequence would be bad enough, but Lucescu also has to contend with a number of injuries. The veteran striker Roberto Baggio and the winger Francesco Moriero, the two players other than Ronaldo most capable of creating scoring chances, are both less than 100 per cent fit. It is likely one will start and the other will be on the bench.

The Brazilian midfielder Ze Elias has a sprained right ankle and the captain Giuseppe Bergomi has a stomach virus. Both men's ailments might prevent them from taking part tomorrow. Ferguson is unlikely to be feeling much sympathy.

Sellars lined up for England call

SCOTT SELLARS could be the surprise solution to England's problem left side of midfield. Kevin Keegan and his assistants have watched the Bolton captain recently and he could earn his first England call at the age of 33.

Sellars is one of Keegan's favourite players from their days together at Newcastle United where he made a number of Andy Cole's goals and he remains one of the best left-sided English midfielders around. England's coach has sent Derek Fazackerley, who was also a Sellars fan at Newcastle, to watch him in action twice in the past fortnight and his other scout, Arthur Cox, has also assessed his form.

Sellars could be a surprise name in the squad to face Poland on Saturday week as Keegan is frustrated in his search for left-sided players. Steve McManaman is having problems at Liverpool, and was left out of the squad to face Derby at Pride Park, where Keegan made his first official

BY ALAN NIXON

scouting trip. Darren Anderton looked uncomfortable in the role in the game against France, while other alternatives are Blackburn's Jason Wilcox and Leicester's Steve Guppy.

Keegan took Sellars to Newcastle from Leeds United at the start of the club's purple patch seven years ago and he was sold to Bolton, now in the Nationwide First Division, only because of the dazzling form of David Ginola. He has been one of Bolton's best players as they have struggled to secure a place for themselves in the Premiership.

However, McManaman's troubles may be ending. He will fly out with Liverpool today for a three-day training camp in France. The Liverpool manager, Gerard Houllier, said yesterday there had been no row with the Real Madrid-bound player and that there was no truth in the suggestion that McManaman has played his last game for the Merseysiders.



Cheltenham's finishing post receives a final clean in preparation for today's start of the Festival

David Ashdown

New bookies set for quick profit

RACING

BY GREG WOOD

THE FIVE men charged with doping-related fraud by police last week will not be at Cheltenham today - the Jockey Club made sure of that yesterday when it "warned them off" with immediate effect. Every one else in the racing world, though, will be there, be it in body or in spirit. For the next three days, nothing else matters.

For many, the Festival has been an annual place of pilgrimage for decades, but this year there will be fresh faces at Cheltenham, too. It is just a few months since new rules in the betting ring allowed the bookmakers, many of whom were almost as old as the racecourse itself, to sell off the pitches from which they trade to the highest bidder. Young (or at any rate younger) bookies happily paid up to £100,000 at auction for the chance to stand in Cheltenham's main betting area, where, as one old hand has put it, "the only limit to the amount of money you can take is how quickly you can shove it into the satchel."

Six figures is a lot of money to pay for a small patch of concrete, but the new blood in the betting ring will hope to get it all back, and more, over the next three days. Indeed, one of their number already has. On his first day as a Cheltenham bookie, at the course's last meeting, Freddie Williams took up residence in the prime bet-

ting pitch for which he had just paid £90,000. By the end of the afternoon, he had taken three bets, worth a total of £140,000 from the legendary Irish punter, J.P. McManus. All were losers, and Williams was immediately £50,000 ahead on the deal.

McManus will be back again today, to see runners in his colours in four of the six races, and perhaps to take back some of the cash he left in the ring last time. Where McManus is concerned, such money is usually lent, not lost. In particular, he will hope to see Istabraq win the Champion Hurdle for the second year running. If he does not, Freddie Williams and his colleagues will ood trailers to take home all the booty.

Racegoers who arrived in the West Country a day early yesterday did so in summer clothes, and continuing mild weather can only add to the Festival experience. The track, though, is still riding good to soft, after one of the wettest winters for years, and it will be a demanding test for the horses. Falls are inevitable; fatalities, hopefully, less so.

Jockeys, too, will be the centre of attention, and none more so than Tony McCoy, the champion rider over jumps but a man who has often been too free with

his whip for the liking of the racing authorities. Only yesterday, McCoy was banned for two days for misusing his "persuader", and if he offends again this week, the penalty could be much more severe.

So popular has Cheltenham become in recent years that a crowd limit has now been imposed. It will not feel like it, though, in the cheaper enclosures, where getting a drink in less than 20 minutes is the longest shot of the whole afternoon. A winning favourite or two, though, particularly if it hails from Ireland, will make even the heaving ovens of the grandstand bars seem like the most hospitable places on earth.

Last year, no fewer than seven favourites came home in front, and for the first time in years, many bookies went home with empty pockets. Their wounds have been festering for 12 long months, however, and the law of averages insists that this year it will be the bookmakers' turn. Fortunes will be won and lost during three wild days in the natural crucible below Cleeve Hill, and as ever, the last thought of most racegoers as they leave on Thursday night will be how best to go about getting the money to do it all again next year.

Cheltenham preview, pages 24-25
Terence Blacker, Review, page 4

Lewis gains respect in US

BOXING

BY DAVID FIELD
in New York

LENNOX LEWIS may have to wait for a re-match before proving he is the true heavyweight champion, but his performance against Evander Holyfield appears finally to have won the World Boxing Council championship on the respect he craves on the other side of the Atlantic.

Lewis' controversial draw at Madison Square Garden has outraged much of the boxing fraternity in America. "In a strange way he's become a hero," said his trainer, Emanuel Steward.

The New York Post summed up the furor with the headline "It Sinks", while the New York State governor, George Pataki, wants a state commission to investigate the fight. The city's mayor, Rudy Giuliani, said: "I am embarrassed as a New Yorker," he said. "I know boxing as well as I know about being a mayor. There's no way Holyfield won that fight. There were a lot of people here from England - 6,000, 7,000 - and they will be going home... thinking we are a bunch of cheaters."

Lewis plans to relax in snowy New York for a couple of days, after the decision of the three boxing bodies involved to order a re-match. It may not be as simple as that. Holyfield, holder of the World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation titles, said he would not want to fight before September. "In six months if he wants to get it on we'll get it on," Holyfield said.

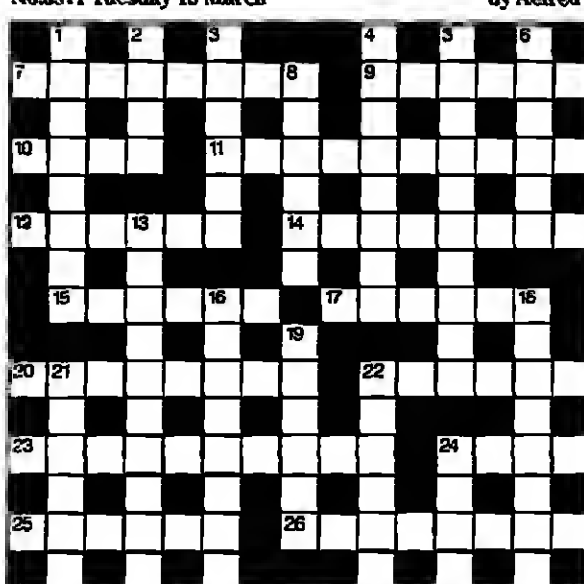
Politics could still intervene. Negotiations will be even more contentious between pay-per-view boxing rivals HBO, which backs Holyfield through promoter Don King and Showtime, the network with which Lewis has a long-term deal. Lewis, who earned half of Holyfield's £12.5m purse, is sure to want a better deal for a re-match. He would also like it to be held in Britain.

Judge Eugenia Williams scored the fifth round 10-9 in favour of Holyfield and not as reported yesterday. Verdict controversy, page 5

THE TUESDAY CROSSWORD

No. 3571 Tuesday 16 March

by Aelred



Monday's Solution

DOWN
1 They are minutely measured in the main (3,5)
2 Succeeded with good section of party (4)
3 With one lieutenant, on the carpet? (6)
4 Spin rather than tumble (5-3)
5 Sheridan's character's very large and inopportune (10)
6 Stove pipe, say, is oo

ACROSS
7 Woman has exciting life on the town (8)
9 Nothing could be clear from this? (6)
10 Sergeant-major has to go back in some obscurity (4)
11 Paper with yen for old-fashioned communication? (10)
12 Husband is Lord in Gulf State (3,3)
14 Outside broadcast in Germany you assess as hard (8)
15 Rush to have second hot dish (6)
17 Writer's work's given one advanced eye complaint (6)
20 Ruffie beauty with first lady on line (8)
22 Maybe remove your

name from plan? (6)
23 To grasp meaning of Mafisse Ali has to work hard (10)
24 In house at Maine (4)
25 Fellow is introducing state of public finance (6)
26 It could transmit English harp playing to you (8)

longer in current use (3-3)
8 Cowardly shouts of pain (6)
13 Spokesperson giving cheek to woman in an offensive way (10)
16 Make engine race and poor Ellie could be woken by it (8)
18 Are not including anything lucky in claim (8)
19 About to go? Not if you do this (6)
21 Injure one, it's found rising in Holland (6)
22 Right-winger holds listener to be uninteresting (6)
24 Laugh hard with one repeatedly (2-2)

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Mother and child

Sir: I was overjoyed to read Natasha Walter's column (15 March). A successful feminist, she has the imagination and empathy to understand that not all mothers wish to work outside the home while their children are small.

As a mother who works sporadically to fit in with my children's needs, I have felt for some time that this Government regards me as a sinner. What really hurts is the assumption that I am of no worth to society unless I am picking up a pay packet.

Being a penurious writer doesn't entitle me to any tax breaks, but thank God for a hard-working partner, and Oxfam's second-hand children's clothes. But women like me who can afford (just) to do what we feel is right for our children should support those unfortunate mothers who are dependent on state benefit. It's hard to avoid thinking that they are being coerced into work, and their children forced into childcare of sometimes dubious quality. Children have a deep and often passionate bond with their mothers, and it is a highly individual thing as to when and how that bond lessens. I foresee some tragedies if the pace is forced.

Have any of New Labour's top women brought up their own children, without the aid of a nanny? Maybe if they had, they would appreciate how important it is to allow mothers a genuinely free choice as to when to return to work. And maybe it would also quash the convenient fiction that mothering is a hobby to be indulged in after work hours, rather than a proper job.

CAROLINE MILLAR

Liverpool

Price of food

Sir: This was the Common Agricultural Policy reform that never was "Blair condemns 'historic' CAP reform as farmers celebrate", 12 March.

Not only did the farmers who get an extra £1bn in taxpayers' money get away with no limits or condition attached to their subsidies, but the price cuts were small and compensation payments large. And, as usual, rural communities and the environment were almost forgotten. No change there then.

Meanwhile the Minister for Agriculture tries to give it a positive spin by saying we will all benefit, as we'll save £70 on our annual food bill. In reality, only about 15 per cent of the price we pay in shops goes to the farmers so supermarkets are highly unlikely to pass on any small savings there to the shoppers. We need a CAP but not this CAP, which remains the wrong policy at the wrong time supporting the wrong things.

VICKI HIRD
Co-ordinator
Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Environment Alliance
London W1

Sir: Current thinking on food seems to be based on the premise that food must cost less and less. This has led to: intensive farming, with all its environmental destruction and rural depopulation; ever more supermarkets, destroying village centres and community; the Common Agricultural Policy, with all its distortions of economic reality. And this, when spending on food is already down to only 11 per cent of incomes in Europe. Even in the current CAP reforms, yet further reduction in food costs is cited as an aim.

Yet food, clothing and shelter are the cardinal requirements for life. Only when these are satisfied can any surplus be applied to education, health, cultural life etc. Ask any Third World country Europeans should regard it as normal to spend say 20-25 per cent of income on food. That could meet the real costs of its production.

NICHOLAS G WRIGLEY
Wheatthampstead, Hertfordshire

Transplant fears

Sir: I am interested to find from your correspondence that not everybody knows that, for the more elaborate transplant

operations, it is necessary that the heart of the donor be beating and that ventilation and the peripheral circulation be maintained. Certainly the transplant card widely available gives little indication of this fact and would not qualify, as Roger Blassberg (2 March) points out, as providing informed consent in the sense applied to other surgical operations.

"Beating-heart" donors and the idea of brain death were widely discussed in the Seventies and early Eighties and arose not, as is often said, because of the need of neurosurgeons, of whom I was one, to know when to stop ventilation if no further benefit to the patient could result, but rather from the desires and needs of transplant surgeons.

A prognosis (death imminent) was transformed into a state (being dead) and a redefinition of death for pragmatic reasons established: a momentous step. While I do not dispute the accuracy with which the present criteria predict that donors selected in this way will die when ventilation is discontinued, I have been unwilling to accept the abandonment of such an ancient concept as to what constitutes death because I thought that, since it was always certain that supplies of suitable donors would be inadequate, attempts would be made to widen further the criteria of "death". This has, in fact, happened in the case of anencephalic infants and in the suggestion that vegetative patients with head injuries be used.

It is probable that there is more widespread dislike amongst nurses and doctors for using beating-heart donors than is recognised and that this contributes to the loss of suitable organs complained of by transplant surgeons. No doubt these considerations are behind a remarkable suggestion by a medical ethicist recently that the organs of patients in this state should become the property of the

government, to distribute in a regulated market, and the British Medical Association's call for a debate on the use of organs without consent.

T T KING FRCS

Brentwood, Essex

Falklands freedom

Sir: The assertion by Vice-President Carlos Ruckauf of Argentina that the Falkland Islanders have "no right to self-determination" is incorrect (report, 11 March). The United Nations Covenant on Political Rights asserts the right of all people to self-determination. Of our own free will, we have determined to remain British and, to its credit, the UK government is guaranteeing that right. For that, we are eternally grateful.

We believe that, given time, peaceful and neighbourly co-existence is achievable in the South Atlantic, based on trust and mutual respect. From our side this excludes the use of coercion or threat and includes recognition of

the historic, cultural and linguistic origins which form the basis of our right to self-determination. We welcome the efforts of Prince Charles to create the atmosphere within which we can all live in peace under the government of our own choosing. This, after all, is the very essence of the democracy which Mr Ruckauf's government espouses.

JAN CHEEK
RICHARD COCKWELL
SHARON HALFORD
Members of the Executive Council
Falkland Islands Government
Stanley
Falkland Islands

Call BMW bluff

Sir: One of the reasons Margaret Thatcher came to power was that Labour kept pouring money into the British Leyland factory at Longbridge during the 1970s. At least it was nationalised then, so there was some justification; but now it is privately owned. If BMW is serious, and decides to close the plant in the absence of a

government subsidy, only then should New Labour take action. They could buy the (closed) plant cheaply, or nationalise it, then sell it in a privatisation or management buy-in/buy-out. That would give BMW competition instead of subsidy, and would genuinely help to protect British jobs, rather than German shareholders' interests.

BMW knew what they were buying at the time: nothing has changed. Mr Blair should call their bluff.

R D PHILLIPS

Cardiff

Brave protest

Sir: Very bravely, *The Independent* castigates Channel 4 for its lack of "bravery" for the scheduling of "What's so Special about David?", a "challenging and important" film in our disability series *Access All Areas*, broadcast at 12.05am on 8 March (Media, 9 March).

In a misguided attempt to show that Channel 4 is eschewing the "difficult" in favour of the "trivial",

you compare this to the scheduling of the "light-hearted" *The Half Monty*, another *Access All Areas* film that aired in peak time at 8.30pm on 4 March. You ignore the fact that *Access All Areas* is a series of more than two films. We broadcast a film about a paralysed mother, "Penny's Baby", at 7.35pm on 5 March and "The Down Syndrome" at 7.30pm the following day.

Channel 4 continues to move so-called minority issues into its mainstream programme line-up. Perhaps, in return, *The Independent* will be brave enough to admit that this is a positive development rather than something to be snide about.

MICHAEL JACKSON

Chief Executive

Channel 4

London SW1

Bombing history

Sir: We must stop bombing Iraq. The UK government must pull out our forces and urge the US to do the same. Aside from overwhelming humanitarian arguments, the heritage of Western civilisation lies under the sands of Iraq, and it has been plundered continuously since the Gulf war.

The Iraqis used to be proud guardians of their ancient cities, the most famous of which is Babylon, but UN sanctions have had their price. Unfortunately since 1991 looting of entirely undocumented sites, amongst the most important ancient settlements found, is already leading to the deletion of history, perhaps rendering us incapable of answering crucial questions about the past.

Iraq is the land where Christianity, Judaism and Islam have their common roots and where Abraham lived in the city of Ur around the 3rd millennium BC. We owe it to future generations to find and pass on that history – not bomb it from the record.

STEFAN WICKHAM

London W1

Spurs' shame

Sir: I write to add a voice to your correspondent's concern for Stan Collymore, in the context of the appalling climate of intolerance and hostility in this country towards mental illness, including clinical depression (letter, 13 March).

As a football fan, as well as a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist, I was shocked to be at Saturday's game between Tottenham Hotspur and Aston Villa and to hear my fellow Spurs supporters jeering and taunting Collymore with chants of "You're mad and you know you are" and "You're gonna be locked up."

It is too easy to shrug this off as rumbustious or light-hearted. It is in fact the ugly, cruel behaviour of a mob. Spurs fans are rightly sensitive to any hint of anti-Semitism towards opposing supporters, but apparently unaware of behaving in an equally hateful manner.

Whatever the details of Collymore's situation, he is suffering from a serious psychological condition, and is clearly playing under considerable strain. He deserves our respect and compassion, not our mockery.

Underlying this mockery is, of course, fear in all of us of mental illness and emotional vulnerability, as well as envy of the talent which footballers possess and the money they earn. While this may help to understand such mob behaviour, it does not justify it.

NOEL HESS

Department of Psychotherapy
University College Hospital
London WC1

Avant garde

Sir: While I read with great interest the piece by Philip Hensher "If this is great art, how can it be reduced to a joke?" (11 March) I cannot help feeling he has got matters back to front.

Writing about the work of the conceptual artist Gillian Wearing, and the tendency for her ideas to be heavily borrowed by the advertising industry, he seemed to feel that the solution is for her art to become more complex, and thus less easily borrowed.

Having your ideas borrowed is the whole point. The artist's function within society is surely to act as an agent for cultural reconnaissance, to look at avenues we might wish to wander down.

The only dilemma comes when the plagiarist affects your ability to command a market price. That difficulty is caused by treating art as commodity. But it isn't the fault of the artist.

The commercial rot in the art world has gone too far for us to stop it (it is, after all, nearly as old as art itself), and the only correction left is by way of public money being given to artists. Which is presumably why we have national collections.

The logical conclusion to this economic quadrille is to tax the advertising industry itself, a tariff could be set up for how often they raided the ideas from our cultural storehouse.

PHILIP FREEMAN

Llandinam, Powys

This one won't fly

Sir: Smither news of scientists in the US having created four-legged chickens (12 March). By taking a gene found in legs and transferring it to the wings of chicken embryos, they have caused the beginnings of a clawed feet to appear. What a handy creation for the poultry farmer, with four legs per bird and no bony wings.

To those who argue the line that genetically modifying organisms are no more than an extension of the selective breeding careful farmers have used for centuries, I say: show me a four-legged chicken thus bred. Perhaps these same people will tell us that four-legged chickens will help to feed the world's starving.

PETER F KENYON
Summer Hill,
New South Wales,
Australia

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



Cuba No 2: Schoolchildren chatting and hanging out on the streets of Havana

Michael MacSweeney

IN BRIEF

structures which are the root cause of world poverty. PETER B PATYSSON
London SW18

Sir: As the man most instrumental in raising the public profile of Third World aid and achieving record funds through Live Aid, Bob Geldof has simply demonstrated the heroic virtue which Paul Valéry defines as a qualification for sainthood ("Arise, Sir Bob", 12 March). PAUL NEWMAN
Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire

Sir: I am cynical about the increasing trend for the media to approach the victims of a crime or their relatives after a

trial and ask them if they are happy with the sentence. Justice is there to protect society, not for revenge. If you ask the victims' views maybe you should also ask the criminal. One will say the sentence is too light, the other too severe; neither is relevant. DAVID DAY
Cold Ash, Berkshire

Sir: Charles Arthur and Andrew Gumbel refer to the death of Mr Aldo Morita ("Do not underestimate the power of Sony", 11 March). Mr Morita has not died and, although not involved in the active running of the company, retains the title of Founder and Honorary Chairman. W H VESTEY
General Manager, Public Affairs
Sony United Kingdom Ltd
Weybridge, Surrey

My ideal version is showing at the Kington Coronet

ONCE found myself sitting at a big lunch next to Stephen Fry and asked him, as one does, what he was doing. I mean really doing, and he said what he was really, really doing – apart from all this acting and writing and earning a living lark – was working on a film script of John Kennedy Toole's novel, *A Confederacy of Dunces*.

This was what he was really doing in the sense that he had started it and he couldn't see the end in sight. I met him again about a year later and asked him if he was still working on the film script, and he said wearily. Of course, yes, still working away at it, which is normally what writers say when they aren't working away at it, just thinking about it, or actually doing some work but seeming to progress backwards...

I'm glad he hasn't finished that script yet, because I don't particularly want to see a film made of *A Confederacy of Dunces*, even from a Stephen Fry script. This rich, rambling comic novel is set in New Orleans, which is where I bought my first copy of the book – no, I tell a lie, I didn't actually buy it there, because a bookseller in New Orleans I was talking to was so shocked to hear that I had never read *A Confederacy of Dunces* that he gave me a copy free, along with all the other books I was paying for; and I am very glad that he did, because it turned out to be one of those books which leave such an impression on you that you almost make your own filmed version of it in your mind as you go along, and the last thing you ever want to see is someone else's film version.

We must all have books like this, books we like so much that we don't want other people to make films of them. (In my wife's case, she has just added the Baroness Orczy Scarlet Pimpernel books to her list. She is still trembling with rage over the television travesties recently broadcast, which seemed to her to miss the entire point.)

Actually, I've got books I like so much I don't want other people to read them. I've met other people who have read *A Confederacy of Dunces*. Stephen Fry, for one. But I have never met anyone who has read *Un Rude Hiver* by Raymond Queneau, or *L'Affaire Blaireau* by Alphonse Allais, or *Voyages en Espagne* by Théophile Gautier, which are three of my favourite books, and which I guess I might like less if they were popular. Or



MILES KINGTON
We must all have books we like so much that we don't want other people to make films of them

available in English. But I am safe in the knowledge that they are safe from prying eyes, at least on this

side of the Channel, because they are off-syllabus.

When I was doing modern languages, all the weary way from early school to university, there were certain authors you could not avoid, around whom there were no ring roads. You always had to go via Racine, Corneille, Goethe, Schiller, Molière, Thomas Mann, Flaubert... It was only when you got off the beaten syllabus that you could start taking pleasure in the scenery. In the off-syllabus writers, or the off-syllabus works of on-syllabus writers.

I came to think after a while that all the big chaps on the motorway exit roads, the Racines and Schillers, were only there out of duty and that all the good stuff worth reading was off the beaten track, so I occasionally become con-

fused to find plays by Racine going on in the West End. I assume that everyone knows you don't put Racine on in the theatre – you only study him for exams. Indeed, one result of my education was that I came to think that some authors in English were not for reading, only for studying. Chaucer, of course, and Milton, and Beowulf, Dryden, and Ben Jonson. All for work, never for pleasure. Coming closer to today, I'd assume that nobody ever reads Thackeray and George Meredith, save for study, and probably Henry James and Proust...

George Bernard Shaw attempted to decree in his will that none of his plays should ever be set for exams, for fear it would make the young hate him. But some books actually seem written only for exam purposes. I can remember

one book from my French A level days which is a perfect example. It was called *Letters from My Windmill*, by Alphonse Daudet. A lightweight book, a lightweight author. Pleasant, short, ideal for yielding essay subjects. Everyone at school had a copy. Everyone hated it even though it was actually quite a nice book, and I have never met anyone since I left school who has so much as mentioned the book.

So you can imagine the shock of finding that on Radio 4 this week, *Letters from My Windmill* – a book which has never previously been seen outside any classroom anywhere – is being read out loud in episodes at 9.45 am each day. By Stephen Fry, as it happens.

Oh well, at least it stops him turning *A Confederacy of Dunces* into a film.

JP 11/15/99

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Spurs' shame

Sir, I write to add a voice to the correspondent's concern for the appalling, chaotic and hostile atmosphere in this country towards mental illness, especially clinical depression (letter, 12 March).

As a football fan, as well as a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist, I was shocked to be at Saturday's game between Tottenham Hotspur and Aston Villa. I saw the Tottenham supporters, cheering and chanting, and I saw the Villa supporters, cheering and chanting. I saw the Tottenham supporters, cheering and chanting, and I saw the Villa supporters, cheering and chanting.

Under the details of Tottenham's situation, he is suffering from a serious psychological condition, and clearly playing under considerable strain. He deserves our respect and compassion, not our mockery. Under the details of Tottenham's situation, he is suffering from a serious psychological condition, and clearly playing under considerable strain. He deserves our respect and compassion, not our mockery.

Avant garde

Sir, While I read with great interest the piece by Philip Hensher in the Independent, I am a bit confused by his argument. He says that the avant-garde is a thing of the past, but he also says that it is a thing of the future.

Writing about the work of the avant-garde, Hensher says that it is a thing of the past, but he also says that it is a thing of the future. He says that the avant-garde is a thing of the past, but he also says that it is a thing of the future. He says that the avant-garde is a thing of the past, but he also says that it is a thing of the future.

The avant-garde is a thing of the past, but it is also a thing of the future. It is a thing of the past, but it is also a thing of the future. It is a thing of the past, but it is also a thing of the future. It is a thing of the past, but it is also a thing of the future.

This one won't fly

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Coronet

The avant-garde is a thing of the past, but it is also a thing of the future. It is a thing of the past, but it is also a thing of the future. It is a thing of the past, but it is also a thing of the future. It is a thing of the past, but it is also a thing of the future.

Only radical reform will cure the EU of its corruption

ONE OF the proudest boasts of the founding fathers of the project of European integration more than 40 years ago was that the Commissioners of the European Community would be required to take an oath. By this, their primary allegiance was pledged to Europe rather than the "home" nations and governments that had sent them to Brussels. The latest report into corruption in the European Union suggests that, in too many cases, European Commissioners' first allegiances these days are to themselves, their cronies, and even their dentists.

The humiliation of the Commission of the European Union at the hands of the "wise men" who reported on the allegations of fraud, and particularly the case of Edith Cresson, tells us all we needed, wanted, and, indeed, feared to learn about the state of "Europe" today. It is corrupt. Indeed, to adapt a fashionable phrase, it is "institutionally corrupt". That is to say that the faults lie not so much in the personalities involved but in the very nature of the institutions themselves. They are "dysfunctional".

It would, of course, be preferable to see the Commission filled with men and women who do not fit quite into the superannated cabinet minister mould. There is too much of the Elysian Fields about nominations to these important posts. But even the most idealistic of commissioners might be tempted to become arrogant without accountability.

The time has come for Europe's friends to acknowledge that radical reform to the EU's institutions is more than desirable: it is the only way in which the whole European ideal can be realised. Europe faces major challenges. We cannot expect the euro to be strong, or for the EU to take on the United States in a trade war, or to reform the Common Agricultural Policy, or embrace countries to the east, with EU institutions which are not up to these tasks.

Europe needs a constitution badly. For a political entity comprising 350 million people, with a single currency and common foreign and defence policies, to lack viable democratically accountable structures is a dangerous flaw. What we have is a series of sometimes contradictory Treaties, case law in the European Court and a corpus of decisions and conventions made by the Commission and Council of Ministers. Hardly a "citizens' Europe". Many members of the EU, such as Denmark, have ancient democratic traditions; others, such as Germany and Spain, have modern constitutions that are models of devolution. There is the unique accountability which the Westminster system imposes on the executive. It cannot be beyond the wit of Europe to take the best of these traditions and frame a simple set of political rules to manage its affairs. If Europe fails to reform itself, then it will not command, and will not deserve to command, the allegiance of its citizens.



Even child murderers deserve a fair trial

THE EUROPEAN Commission of Human Rights' decision to allow the appeal of the two youngsters convicted for the murder of Jamie Bulger brings back images we would all rather forget. The closed-circuit camera footage of the toddler being led away by his assailants, Jon Venables and Robert Thompson, will live in the mind just as long as the Moors murders, images of inhuman and unspeakable acts. Jamie's parents have every right to seek retribution for those acts, stricken with a grief we can only guess at.

But we must attempt to comprehend such crimes, if condemnation is not to replace reason. As the Commission put it yesterday, trials must not appear simply "an exercise in the vindication of public outrage". This was exactly what many yearned for at the time, John Major as Prime

Minister recommending we "condemn a little more, and understand a little less". Unfortunately, that wish to punish has eclipsed two principles which should underpin the law: judicial independence, and fairness to the accused.

The Home Secretary of the time, Michael Howard, should not have interfered in setting a new minimum limit to the sentence, over and above that decided through proper judicial channels. This populist decision has endangered the conviction itself, first quashed in the domestic courts and now one of the subjects of the European appeal. Ministers should not interfere in this way again. The adult court in which the two boys were tried did try to accommodate the defendants' age: social workers were allowed into the courtroom, and shorter sessions were introduced. But as the Commission concludes, children should not have been tried there in the first place.

For all New Labour's reforms of the law on youth crime, often more crude and authoritarian than well-judged and precise, it remains the case that, for murder,

juveniles face an adult criminal court. Thus all the defects of the Bulger trial – the high-octane media coverage of a trial held in public, the absence of evidence from the defendants, the sight of two 11-year-olds propped up on high chairs in the dock – could be repeated. This must end. Other countries operate a perfectly efficient juvenile justice system up to the age of 18, and it is time that we took this civilising step towards the European norm.

The winner

IN A curious way, Lennox Lewis emerged a winner at Madison Square Garden on Saturday night. A clear-cut victory would have greatly pleased his supporters, of course. But the seemingly unjust denial of the world heavyweight crown – and on foreign soil at that – now there's a cause that the British really will rally around in their familiar Dunkirk spirit for lost causes. Lennox Lewis, whatever the result in the rematch, has finally won over the British public.

I'm sorry, but your children are not your own private property

AS AN Englishman I spend quite a lot of my time lamenting the impact of change on my environment. People aren't as courteous as once they were, there are too many cars, and young women rest their boots on train seats. Such lamentation is an essential part of our culture. An overwhelmingly urban and exceptionally mobile nation, we nevertheless extol the virtues of idealised village life: stability, quiet, order and community. Scarcely a weekend passes without some journalist breathlessly informing her Sunday readers about her imminent exchange of the North London terrace for the fields and oaks of East Anglia. Where the larks they sing melodious, and raspberries will be one and all at hand.

I imagine that it was to this desire to recapture a lost time that William Hague was appealing last night, when he launched his campaign against the present, liberal divorce laws. Those in the first flush of marriage are often incredulous about what happens later, but what evidence, one wonders, does he have for assuming that the high rate of marital breakdown is caused by a lax divorce regime – rather than the other way about?

Not much, I would think. Those who initiate divorce proceedings are usually women, and it is mostly women who will suffer financially from the ending of a marriage. Research undertaken for the Lord Chancellor's Department, and published last month, indicates that alterations to the law might help in making divorce less acrimonious but has little impact on the decision to end a relationship. And not

does the prospect of being economically disadvantaged.

What is even more depressing, particularly for the Home Secretary, is the early evidence that pre-marital counselling is also ineffective in cutting the divorce rate. Few people have experienced any form of advice and – as the authors rather mordantly put it – "there is no evidence of unsatisfied demand". Intensive therapy might have assisted between 11 and 16 per cent of those who attended, but it should be remembered that only the most committed were likely to have lain on the couch in the first place.

You can argue the toss as to whether long-term economic or cultural factors have had the greatest effect on divorce levels; for most of us the two are too closely entwined to be disentangled. Women's economic independence has run alongside a heightened expectation from women of what they should gain from marriage. In the late Nineties the ethos that seems increasingly to underpin marriage is a strange mélange of romanticism and contractualism. Should one partner not provide the other partner with what he or she needs, then there is not only a moral entitlement to end the relationship, there is actually a social expectation that it should be ended.

And frankly, it wouldn't matter a toss should all marriages fetch up in divorce, if children weren't involved. But here, it seems to me, old Hague is right about the liberal consensus. We have been careless about how divorce and separation affect children. Take this little, emblematic sentence



DAVID AARONOVITCH

I've met people who are more scrupulous about their clothes, and far more faithful to their pets

from a right-on woman writing in a trendy magazine. Here Irma Reilly (in LM magazine) explains divorce approvingly, in an article that does not mention children once: "People change – grow apart, get bored with each other, meet other people they like more. And so they leave one relationship to start another." Put like this, it's a wonder that any couple manages to make it all the way through to the adulthood of their kids. I have met people who are more scrupulous about their clothes, and far more faithful to their pets.

It isn't surprising then, that many – especially those who have been divorced – have deluded themselves into believing that divorce doesn't really harm children. Children are "resilient", and, in any case, conveniently better off when loveless and conflic-

ted relationships between their parents are brought to an end. But over the past half decade the evidence has steadily piled up, indicating that the impact upon kids of parental breakup is often devastating, and usually damaging. Looked at from the child's point of view it is well worth mummies and daddies going that extra mile to accommodate one another, even to the extent of living with occasional adulteries or periods of abstinence.

But the child's point of view is not one we particularly want to hear. Perhaps this is because we are all children now, no matter how old we are. As the NSPCC "Out of Sight" campaign launched today reveals, the highest rates of homicide in this country are suffered by the under fours. Forty per cent of all killings are of infants under the age of one. Of their killers half are male "carers", a third are mothers and 14 per cent are other carers acting in loco parentis (we should bear in mind here the vasty greater amount of time that mothers spend with small children). We defer to them, spoil them and – if that doesn't keep the little sods quiet – we kill them. And this misery, almost all of it, goes on in the privacy of the home.

Parents, of course, know what's best for their children. This is the era of the privatisation of childhood. It is also an age in which some would-be parents really do see their children as fashion accessories. Still others view them as bolsters to their falling egos, as comfort zones for dead-ended, dumpy teenage girls to surround themselves with. In this respect it is

hard not to sympathise with teachers, confronted each day by failing parents who will brook no correction or advice. The political right believes that the state has minimal business interfering in child-rearing (the "nanny-state" is, after all, a term of abuse), the left argues that – when it comes to single mothers – they should be given the money, but that no one should tell them what to do. For all the talk of overweening, Stalinist social workers, the fact is that the presumption made by social services is usually to leave a child with its natural mother.

This week has also seen further discussion of the Bulger case, with the successful appeal by the solicitor of the two young killers to the European Court. The anticipated row is now building up. But the Bulger case was not singular just because two children killed another. That had happened before. It was dreadful because all those adults could and should have stopped Jamie's progression to his execution, and they failed to. One child being dragged, screaming by two others was, essentially, a private business.

This is my lament then, my bit of nostalgia. I want us to start looking out for each other's children. I want us to risk the charge of nosiness and interference that might result from our intervention.

I want children to be seen as a social concern, and not as the private property of their parents. I want babushkas to stop us in the street and tell us when we haven't wrapped the baby up warmly enough. Other people's sex lives are none of our business. Other people's children are.

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
US press comment on the result of the Lewis-Holyfield title fight

posed to crown an undisputed champion gave way to a dawn where the titles still are muddled and mediocrity threatens to rule.
Tampa Tribune

IT WAS a draw. And a disgrace. Lennox Lewis and Evander Holyfield gave us a show last night. They gave the Garden a worthy fight, full of skill and heart and drama. Then the

ending was a disgrace. A shame and a disgrace. This was supposed to be action that recalled the best of the sport of boxing in New York, not the worst of it, not some decision out of the days when it barely seemed to matter how the fight had gone.
New York Daily News

Whitaker-Julio Cesar Chavez, this was the most blatant, daring daylight heist. Lewis got robbed. Holyfield, promoted by King, was in the gateway car as he later talked rematch. Why don't we resurrect that wonderful old phrase "prize-fighting", because there's no such thing as "professional" boxing. Any stooge or henchman can find employment as long as you know the right crook. (Jon Saraceno) USA Today

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The boys do not seem prepared to accept that they should be punished for what they did."
Sean Sexton, solicitor to James Bulger's mother

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Logic is like the sword – those who appeal to it shall perish by it."
Samuel Butler, English writer

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PANDORA

IT'S KATE Moss - and she's naked. Gallery owner Alex Proud is telling friends he will showcase a "world exclusive exhibition" of Croydon's poster girl, along with other snaps of undraped supermodels, on 4 September at his eponymous premises in London's Charing Cross Road. The pictures, recently teased in *Dazed & Confused* magazine, were shot at studios in Islington by rising kodachrome star Rankin - people are starting to say he's the 21st-century Bailey.

HIGH SPIRITS and extreme gossip were on the menu at Proud's opening of Dennis Morris's portraits of Bob Marley (pictured) the other night. The Jamaican High Commissioner Derick Heaven, thespian Kristin Scott Thomas, model Sophie Dahl and Wimbledon striker Robbie Earle mingled with the throng as quondam Radio 1 DJ Lisa 'Anson' conspicuously tried to mend fences with the fourth estate. Everyone was talking about Warner Brothers' rumoured green light for a biopic about old natty dreadlocks; word is that the as yet untitled Marley project will (finally) be ready to shoot at the end of this year.

WHODATHUNKIT? ICELAND grows its own bananas.

HURRAY FOR Holyrood! The polls say SNP trails Labour by 15 points in the 6 May Scottish election. So some pundits are now openly urging the SNP to hook up with the Lib Dems. Both SNP and Lib Dems share a penchant for tax-and-spend - and keeping No Labour out. Lib Dem Scottish leader Jim Wallace and Aberdeenshire MP Sir Robert Smith seem keen to share a wee dram with the ScotNats: even MPs Ray Michie and Malcolm Bruce might be persuaded to rush down the aisle at Gretna Green for a marriage of mutual convenience. Michie and Bruce would certainly be popular in Salmond's pool: last year the duo published a pamphlet calling for the abolition of the national anthem, and a north-of-the-border ban on flying the Union Jack.

DESPITE HIS punishing tour schedule, it's reassuring that the Deputy Prime Minister can find time to up his profile on the sub-continent. While attending a traditional wedding in Delhi (don't ask)



which, coincidentally, has just dropped a Bernie (Eim) to buy up the alleged story of Beckham and Adams's baby Brooklyn (emphatically not pictured).

Contact Pandora by e-mail: pandora@independent.co.uk

there was a sudden flutter among the gossamer veils and colourful saris as the bride turned to Our Number One Guy's Chief Steward and said: "Oh hello John, I know you - I'm from Enfield, you know."

GM FOOD isn't Monsanto's only claim to fame - the "life science" corporation also manufactured Vietnam War defoliant Agent Orange.

ARSENALS MOOTED move to the Millennium Dome site may have to be re-pitched. Experts say a rumoured £300m Gunners bid to relocate to the club's original home near Woolwich Arsenal could run into lighting problems. "Even now modern stadia have a problem with light levels supporting good grass growth," says Geoff Ferris, the Sports Research Institute's grounds supreme. According to Ferris, it's a bigger problem than the site's toxic antecedents. A mouthpiece for English Partnership, the governmental agency that's keen to unload the property when the Millennium Experience exhibition closes in 2001, confirms it would be happy to dismantle "sections of the Dome" and "excavate hardstanding surfaces" to accommodate any footie clubs looking for a new stadium.

PEOPLE ARE saying Victoria Adams wants to be "an involved mother". Perhaps she's planning to pick the nanny herself.

MAYBE IT'S a negotiating tactic, perhaps the circulation needs a boost, but Maggie Koumi, editor of *Hello!* magazine, has fired a warning shot across the grasping bows of the good ship Posh Beckas, on whose decks nuptials are to be celebrated later this year. "The cost of buying stories has really spun out of control," Koumi told Press Gazette, the journalist's trade magazine this week. "I think it's quite frightening and it has to stop. Where will it all end? If a magazine pays £1m every week it'll go bankrupt." *Hello!*'s goodbye would break the fluttering hearts of a nation's shop girls - who'd presumably be left moving their lips to the textual delights of rival OK!

I'm a non-starter at Cheltenham



TERENCE BLACKER

While other students went on marches and found sex, I was getting up at 6.15 to ride out

IT IS the time of the year when unwelcome memories return. The feelings of nausea and emptiness in the stomach that are caused by nerves and weight-loss pills. The weighing-room backchat, the last instructions from connections, the moment when the sounds of the crowd fade and you are alone, on your way to the start. The various phrases that, to this day, can induce a shudder of embarrassment: "two pounds overweight... took no further part... unseated rider". Unhappy moments from the distant past, locked away for the rest of the year in the dusty back room of the memory, tend to escape during the days of the festival at Cheltenham.

Even now, when I move in a world where festivals involve writers sitting on a stage and musing thoughtfully about their art, the term still really only means Cheltenham's National Hunt week, the one festival where, in spite of occasional fantasies (I could still just about do the weight for the Fox-hunters), I can never appear.

For the first 20 years of my life, I dreamed of becoming a steeple-

it would not be entirely true. The fantasy was mine, and it was not about hunting, eventing or show-jumping; it had to be racing.

So my prep school heroes had four legs: Pas Seul, Saffron Tartan, Flame Gun, Kerstin. I kept scrapbooks filled with photographs cut every day from the racing pages of *The Daily Telegraph*. In the epic encounters between Arle and Mill House, my brother and I took sides, arguing our support like other schoolboys following Liverpool or Manchester United.

My embarrassment today is only partly caused by the extent of my obsession. By the time I had reached my teens, I knew that, unlike my brother, I would not become a professional jockey but would be an elegant amateur, riding brilliantly and describing my exploits with becoming wit and modesty for the next day's papers. While others at Cambridge went on marches and demonstrations, discovered sex or advanced their careers in Footlights reviews, I was getting up at 6.15 to ride out at Willie Stephenson's Royston yard. The days when I

should have been listening to Raymond Williams, Tony Tanner, JD Broadbent or LC Knights, I spent travelling to Nottingham or Ulloxeter to ride some no-hoper in a hunter 'chase or novice hurdle. I must have been mad.

I could tell tales of being upsidest Terry Biddlecombe on Fearless Fred at Warwick, of storming at the run-in at Ascot on Mile-a-Minute, of a driving finish here, a crashing fall there... But it would be unconvincing. The enduring memories of those years are of trying to lose weight, sweating it off or consuming a variety of revolting and debilitating pills, of feeling apart from the racing scene and of not winning.

Lester Piggott once said that the only point in taking part in race was to win; you might as well be last as be second. In retrospect, I can see that my brief, inglorious career as a jump jockey proved that I lacked that killer competitiveness. I came second a significant number of times. Even coming into the straight, the distant sound of the crowd reaching us over the grunts and kicks and shouts, I never quite

shook off the nagging conviction that coming second was really not that terrible. It was better than third, and a lot better than "took no further part" or "unseated rider".

I was ashamed of this at the time and still feel uncomfortable with it. Competitiveness is so central a part of the way we live, particularly if we are male, that to be ambitious without particularly wishing to win at the cost of others seems pusillanimous. Perhaps it was no wonder that I ended up as a writer, a profession where, although competition is ubiquitous - you compete with the world, with your peers and, above all, with yourself - it is never head to head and public.

"To be any good you have to think you're the best of your generation," Martin Amis has said, and the sneaky competitive pride of writers will be fully on display at The Word, London's literary festival over the next couple of weeks. Some would say that, in a way, the rivalry between writers is every bit as tough as that between jockeys, but I know which winners' enclosure I believe is the toughest to reach.

Could someone explain why we are bombing Iraq?



MENZIES CAMPBELL

We may in time witness the sight of British air crew dragged through the streets of Baghdad

THE ARMED forces of the United Kingdom and the United States are pursuing an undisclosed war against the regime in Iraq. A significant change has taken place to the rules of engagement within the "no-fly zones", set up under the humanitarian clauses of United Nations Security Resolution 688. The two governments are pursuing an attritional campaign against Iraqi defence systems and military infrastructure that has gone far beyond the original purposes of the "no-fly zones".

Military force is a tool, it is not a policy. Its application is only justifiable in pursuit of a clearly stated political and strategic goal. As yet, no Government minister has come before Parliament to offer the people of Britain a coherent and plausible explanation as to why our air crews have been risking their lives. If luck runs out, it may be only a matter of time before we are forced to witness the sight of British aircrew dragged through the streets of Baghdad on our television screens.

Last December's Operation Desert Fox had clear tactical and strategic aims: to degrade Saddam's capacity to manufacture and deliver weapons of mass destruction, and to buy as much time as possible for the Allies to formulate a new strategy before Saddam was once again in a position to hold the Middle East to ransom. It had become apparent that the efforts of UN monitors to destroy Saddam's capacity to threaten his neighbours and repress his own people with weapons of mass destruction had become unsustainable. Desert Fox was a painful necessity and a last resort after all other means had failed.

This was an example of military force being used for a clear political purpose, with tightly defined tactics and a coherent long-term strategy. But for the repeated defiance and deception of Saddam Hussein, this

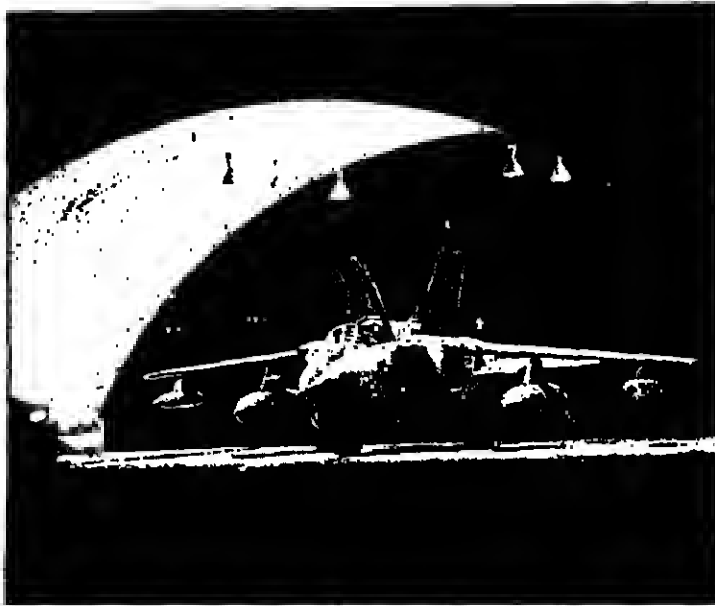
encompass a sustained, even daily, pounding of Iraq's integrated air defence system and command, control and communications facilities. For "defensive", read "offensive". There is a substantial distinction to be drawn between a defensive response to the threat of attack and, as is now taking place, the systematic destruction of Iraq's air defence system.

Such has been the absence of information from the Government that it is impossible for those outside the upper echelons of the military hierarchy to be sure exactly what the present strategy is. Has the Cabinet discussed and approved it?

Although United States officials have been equally reluctant to elucidate, they have said sufficient to allow one to deduce two shifts in policy. First, that the present action is directly intended to disable, debilitate and then destroy Saddam. A senior US administration official is reported to have said: "We see Mr Saddam falling. We are working towards a slow whittling-down of his power, his authority and his nerves".

Second, while the no-fly zones were initially established to protect the Iraqi Kurds in the north and the Shia Muslims in the south, for which the need still remains, recent comments by William Cohen, the US Defence Secretary, suggest that the primary mission is no longer the same as at their inception. He admitted as much on 7 March, when he stated that the main role of US warplanes serving in the no-fly zones was now "to protect the region from Saddam making any kind of an aggressive assault upon them".

These policy alterations appear subtle in isolation, but when coupled with the change in the rules of engagement, they amount to the waging of a "mini undeclared war". According to the Ministry of Defence figures released on 9 March, the total tonnage of British bombs dropped



An RAF Tornado in its hangar in Kuwait Andy Stenning

subsequent to Desert Fox is 72 per cent of the amount dropped during Desert Fox.

This situation cannot endure indefinitely, and it is crucial that the present impasse is ended without further damage to Iraq's economic and civilian infrastructure and the continued suffering of its people.

The enforcement of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions has to remain the main focus, and that will require a new monitoring and inspection body. A preventative strategy of reformed sanctions and monitoring should be authorised through the UN, with clear, achievable objectives and backed by credible enforcement procedures. The threat of force should remain in the event of sustained non-compliance.

Changes must not be perceived as rewarding Saddam for his intransigence. The lifting of sanctions, for example on certain goods, should only be permitted once co-operation with the monitoring body

is achieved and progress towards compliance is maintained.

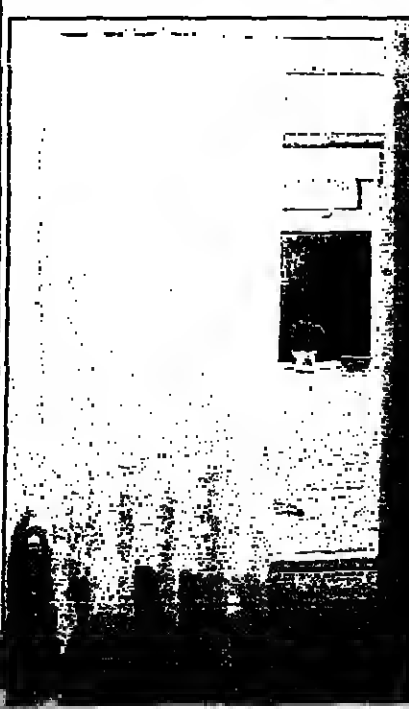
It is now time for the Government to declare its Iraq plan. Parliament does not need to be told, indeed should not be told, the terms of the rules of engagement, but MPs and the country are surely entitled to know what the policy is and where it is leading. The present clandestine manoeuvring is damaging to parliamentary democracy and sets a precedent that future administrations could utilise.

If the thinking underpinning this continued offensive were not shrouded in secrecy, perhaps the deaths of at least 17 Iraqi civilians this year, due to stray Allied ordnance, could be explained. However, as the situation stands, this loss of life is a testament to the unexplained campaign now being waged.

Menzies Campbell MP is the Liberal Democrat spokesman for Foreign Affairs and Defence

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The rise and rise of e-commerce

YOU MAY be asking yourselves what possible qualification I have to develop my chosen theme of electronic commerce. E-commerce covers all business and much of human life. People gaily make forecasts that it will be worth 60bn euros in three years' time.

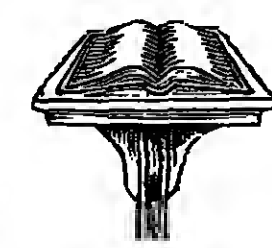
Meteoric Internet companies are bought and sold on huge multiples, putting everyday household names in the shade, yet they make losses. The vague qualification I claim for talking on the subject is that the E-trading world starts and ends with information. It is the fuel that primes the pump and lights the afterburner when the engines have got started. This gives me some confidence to dissect the principles involved.

Reuters operates in societies where even reporting the facts is not acceptable. Perhaps it is because these societies are so riven with dissent or consumed with their growth process that nobody can agree what the facts are. After a time this gives way to a social background in which the facts are fairly readily agreed though opinions about them

may differ, and need to differ to give the citizen the chance to help form his individuality. In the next stage, information is consumed for entertainment. Facts often being rather immaterial - after all, there is no state of emergency, no secret police, you can always learn the facts if you really want.

This could be characterised as a condition affecting many industrial democracies at the onset of the Internet age. A classic example was a recent Internet website report that Hillary Clinton became so annoyed with her errant husband that she "lost it" and hit him so hard about the face that he had to wear make-up to cover up the bruise for a TV appearance. There was, as far as I know, no obvious reason to believe this, though the British newspapers published the report with glee. The information was there. It was free. Random information can be searched with the utmost facility across a whole range of websites which may have no particular track record or credentials. It's movement, it's action, it's modern, it's transatlantic.

It's also boring after a while. So we have to anticipate the emergence of a demand by the consumer to navigate his or her areas of interest in a more structured way guided by preferred information brand names that can be brought together easily.



PODIUM

PETER JOB
From the 'Tacitus'
lecture delivered by the
chief executive of
Reuters at the
Guildhall in London

To summarise the way things may go, let us look at electronic share broking. This is probably the most advanced version of E-commerce that there is in the world today. Much attention is currently

focused on E-brokers who offer minimal cost of execution - perhaps eight dollars per trade instead of several hundred.

But the price may fall further, and they will have to gear up their fixed costs to handle larger and larger volumes, only to be left stranded perhaps by a cyclical fall on market turnover. I prefer the idea of a broker offering a totally integrated customer experience.

The investor clicks on a headline to find details of the target company, and a second click takes him into the real-time market where he can choose to trade. The information output measures his success. Keeping a checking account with the same broker becomes a useful convenience.

If he has a complex trade he can still phone up a human being, in return for a larger commission and, ultimately, if he is really in need of detailed advice, he still has the chance to go into a red brick building somewhere and discuss the matter. It is not difficult to see that this more complex chain of value could lock in loyal and satisfied rather than just opportunistic customers. Journalists usually know

better than to forecast matters immediately since they may be proven wrong. But I agreed to do this lecture so I had better give some kind of prognosis.

World electronic trade will develop further because information will be available to support transactions in a very convenient way. The providers of the information will make good margins because they will to a large extent re-use assets they already have.

Aggregators will be there to guide people through a random internet world to the right place. They will make money because the cost of performing this function is not huge and advertisers will pay them for offering new and popular means of access to defined audiences. They will not need to or be able to enslave anyone else to their interests along the way.

Advertisers will benefit because they will be able to offer their clients new techniques of pinpointing particular market segments without changing their current means of reaching consumers through broadcast TV. Broadcasters will not be banged or crucified by the Internet.

Handwritten signature: J. P. 1550

Lowell Fulson

ONE DARE night in Mississippi, the blues singer and guitarist Lowell Fulson was told his life wasn't worth a nickel. His band's coach had accidentally jammed a white woman's car up against a bridge, bringing rednecks running out of the woods. "It was my trumpet player caused the problem - he was from the South, Carolina, but wouldn't say yassuh, nossuh to them. I'm trying to calm the sheriff down, and he shouts, 'You know how much it costs me to kill you? A nickel. That's what the shell costs.'"

A lifelong pragmatist, Fulson placated the sheriff with the "yassuh, nossuh" that was obligatory social etiquette for a black musician in the American South in 1956. Retelling the story 40 years later, he bore little resentment, convinced that the world the sheriff and his cronies epitomised had gone forever.

The sheriff had seen a worthless blues singer - Fulson was a bluesman, for sure. His credentials were impeccable, including launching the career of B.B. King, and writing hits like "Reconsider Baby", which became a staple of Elvis Presley's repertoire. But Fulson's influence stretched across genres, from the earliest of itinerant blues right up to the most sophisticated Nineties R&B.

When I spent a couple of days with Fulson and his manager-landlady Tina Mayfield in 1995, his career seemed lower than low-key. But that was the way he liked it. Relaxed, cheroot-chomping, he would get regular calls to guest with B.B. King, or from Eric Clapton's publishers, but where many would have parlayed such contacts into a star-studded comeback, Fulson was happy cutting small-label albums and playing the occasional Christmas show. If he reckoned he'd packed enough into the first 50 years of his life to allow him to take it easy for a decade or three, he had good reason.

It was Fulson's grandfather, Old Man Henry Fulson, who started it all. Brought over as a slave from Africa in the 1850s, he escaped, and was adopted by a Choctaw tribe, marrying a Choctaw woman - Lowell's grandmother - and building a reputation as a medicine man. Even at 90, Henry's hillbilly violin was still boisterous enough to entrance the young Lowell, who was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1921. Before long he was sneaking away with an uncle's guitar, always returning it perfectly afterwards to conceal the unauthorised loan.

By his teens, Lowell Fulson had left home for a guitar-playing job with the Dan Wright String Band, who breached musical colour bars by playing "white" Western Swing.

After meeting the harmonica player Texas Alexander in 1939, Fulson hit the road with him, once he had got hold of a new guitar from the pawnshop. He "had to give my old one back to my mother-in-law - she wouldn't have me playing no Devil's music on it". But as soon as Fulson had learned to work a crowd and stepped out on some solo dates, the draft intervened. In 1944 he was posted to the Pacific island of Guam.

The navy wanted him on submarine duty. Fulson had different ideas: "I bluffed my way into the kitchen, and worked up this special chicken dish for the base commander. That helped decide him I didn't need shipping out on no submarine." Soon he linked up with a black piano player, and a trio of white Boston-

something suave, seductive and unique. The song came to him on a fishing trip. "You'd think I was a fool, sitting out there in Texas at night with a brand new Fleetwood Cadillac next to me and my line out. But I didn't want no company. You can't use the music that everybody uses - you gotta regenerate everything. Fishing relaxed me, and that helped."

"Reconsider Baby" is a hit status removed whatever stability Fulson's rollercoaster life had enjoyed. His success inspired his pianist, one Ray Charles, to try out on his own, taking several key band members with him. Fulson's sound was a crucial ingredient in Charles's groundbreaking recipe for soul, but Brother Ray did partly repay the debt by covering a Fulson song, "Sinners Prayer". Forced to rely on session musicians, Fulson lost his way until the mid-Sixties, when he signed to a new label - at which point he nearly lost his name. A secretarial error at Kent Records rechristened him Lowell Fulson, and the label insisted on sticking with the misspelt name for several years.

By 1967, blues was out of favour, but black Americans recognised Fulson's smooth R&B as soul, and put songs like "Tramp" and "Black Night" into the charts. Ironically, Fulson's rivals were more convinced of his genius than his own record label was - Otis Redding spotted "Tramp" as a hit, and recorded a version in a duet with Carla Thomas that outsold Fulson's original. If "Reconsider Baby" was Fulson's blues standard, covered by Elvis Presley and, more recently, Eric Clapton, "Tramp" was his soul staple, recorded or sampled by everyone from Joe Tex to Salt-N-Pepa, De La Soul and Prince.

Having given one song to B.B., Fulson was smart enough to keep hold of the rest, and a succession of covers helped him through the next lean period which preceded a modest revival in the Eighties and after. By then, his audience was pretty much restricted to blues diehards, but Fulson had made his indelible mark on musical history. Whether you count his impact on B.B. King, and thence to Eric Clapton and just about every electric guitarist in the world, or Ray Charles, and hence the world of soul, his influence was pervasive, and was more recently honoured with induction to the Blues Hall Of Fame, plus a Grammy nomination, last year. Twenty-five cents will never be worth as much again.

PAUL TRYNKA

Lowell Fulson, singer, guitarist and songwriter; born Tulsa, Oklahoma 31 March 1921; died Los Angeles 6 March 1999.



Fulson, with B.B. King, forged a new strand of blues music. Michael Ochs Archives / Redferns

Sidney Gottlieb

SIDNEY GOTTLIEB was living vindication for conspiracy theorists that there is nothing, however evil, pointless or even lunatic, that uncountable intelligence agencies will not get up to in the pursuit of their secret wars.

For two decades he ran a CIA programme aimed at nothing less than control of the human mind. Its tools were mind-altering drugs, most notably LSD. Its subjects, almost all of them unwitting, were society's outcasts: prostitutes and their clients, mental patients, convicted criminals - people, in the words of one of Gottlieb's colleagues, "who could not fight back". At the end of it all, just as the conspiracy theorists would have predicted, Gottlieb himself pronounced that the entire exercise had been a waste of time.

The project, called MKUltra, began in 1953, two years after Gottlieb had joined the agency as chief of its technical services division. It was a period when paranoia ruled at Langley, the Virginia headquarters of the CIA. At home, McCarthyism was at its apogee. Abroad, the Soviet Union and increasingly China were regarded as mortal threats. America had lost its nuclear monopoly while field operations against Moscow would soon be thrown into turmoil by the obsession of James Jesus Angleton, head of CIA counter-intelligence, that the agency had been penetrated by a mole at the highest levels.

Its leadership was also fixated by the fear that the great Communist powers were perfecting techniques of mind control - *The Manchurian Candidate* made real. The CIA, therefore, had to get its blow in first. Enter Sidney Gottlieb.

He was born in 1918 the son of Hungarian Jewish immigrants, but never adopted the faith; indeed much of the rest of his life was a search for religious fulfilment, via agnosticism, Christianity and even Zen Buddhism. His scientific abilities however were evident when he graduated *summa cum laude* in chemistry from the University of Wisconsin in 1940.

To his enduring disappointment, a club foot barred him from active service in the Second World War. Instead his patriotism would find its outlet in the CIA, where the war had never ended. Only the enemy had changed.

Gottlieb's contribution was to oversee MKUltra. From the early 1950s through most of the 1960s hundreds of American citizens were administered mind-altering drugs. One mental patient in Kentucky was given LSD for 174 consecutive days. In all the agency conducted 149 mind-control experiments. At least one "participant" died as a result of the experiments and several others went mad.

The most bizarre brainwave of Gottlieb (himself a frequent user of LSD) was to set up a string of CIA-controlled brothels in San Francisco which operated for eight years. Prostitutes would slip drugs to their customers, and the results would be observed by agency officials through two-way mirrors. Such was the clandestine contribution of the city of flower power to the national war effort in Vietnam. Unfortunately its visible contribution, of spawning a hippy movement which led the protest against the war, was far more effective.

Gottlieb's inventiveness also ran to a variety of assassination plots against various foreign targets. He perfected a contaminated handkerchief for use against an Iraqi colonel, poisoned presents that were to eliminate the troublesome Fidel Castro, and a poisoned dart designed to get rid of Patrice Lumumba, Communist sympathiser and leader of the Congo. Needless to say, none of the devices worked.

Gottlieb retired in 1972, having concluded that all his work had been useless. That however did not deter the CIA from awarding him its highest honour, the Distinguished Intelligence Medal, before it destroyed the bulk of the MKUltra files.

In his way Sidney Gottlieb was a loyal servant of American government - but his ways differed only in degree from the experiments for which the wartime allies, among them the US, sent Nazi doctors to the gallows for crimes against humanity. But, as John Marks, author of *The Search for the Manchurian Candidate: the CIA and mind control* (1979), the definitive work on the subject, wrote: "He never did what he did for inhuman reasons. He thought he was doing exactly what was needed. And in the context of the time, who could argue?"

Gottlieb's life after the CIA resembled a quest for atonement. With his wife Margaret, he spent 18 months in India running a leper hospital. He then moved back to rural Virginia, where he indulged two longstanding hobbies, folk dancing and goat herding. He devoted his final years to work in a hospice, looking after the dying.

RUPERT CORNWELL

Sidney Gottlieb, chemist and intelligence officer; born New York 3 August 1918; married 1942 Margaret Moore (two sons, two daughters); died Washington, Virginia 7 March 1999.

You'd think I was a fool, sitting there with my line out. But I didn't want no company. You can't use the music that everybody uses - you gotta regenerate everything'

ans, whom he schooled in country and western, and Louis Jordan-style jump blues - both styles were a hit with American sailors and Guam natives alike.

Once honourably discharged, Fulson landed a record deal in Oakland, California, and brought over his brother Martin to play second guitar. They soon started making waves with songs like "Three O'Clock Blues" and "Everyday I Have the Blues". A young Memphis DJ called B.B. King was an enthusiastic plugger of Fulson's records; in return, Fulson gave "Three O'Clock Blues", publishing and all, to B.B. It would become King's first hit, and together King and Fulson would forge a whole new strand of blues music, more fluid and sophisticated than the gritty, urban blues stomping out of Chicago.

Fulson's first national hit, "Reconsider Baby", was typical, a standard blues sequence refashioned into

Tanya Matthews



Matthews: 'Get to work, you have a new regime!'

OVER FOUR decades, Tanya Matthews was the Voice of the BBC from Tunis, filing daily reports for the BBC African Service from her beautiful Moorish house in the Tunis suburb of Sidi Bou Said.

Her style was pure idiosyncrasy: despatches written long-hand, often on the backs of envelopes, and delivered in emphatic and slightly over-enthusiastic English (reflecting her Russian roots) down the telephone line to the World Service in London. Her subject was Tunisia, in all its aspects but especially the scandal and intrigue at the "court" of President Habib Bourguiba, one of Africa's longest-serving leaders.

Indeed, it was Bourguiba who provided Matthews with her greatest "scoop", for she was the first to report the coup which ended his increasingly erratic rule in 1987. In typical fashion, she had received an early morning call from an old Tunisian girlfriend in Paris telling her, "Get to work, you have a new regime!" Two years earlier, Matthews had won an equally notable success: she was the first journalist

inside the PLO compound near Tunis after it had been bombed by Israeli jets.

Tanya Matthews began life as Tatiana Borissova in the Chechen capital, Grozny, in 1913. She married young, to a revolutionary cameraman. They fled to Moscow after she got into trouble with the KGB. It was there that she met and fell in love with the British correspondent Ronnie Matthews. She divorced her husband and fled Russia in 1944 with her new British spouse and baby son, Christopher, but she was forced to leave Anna, the daughter from her first marriage, behind.

The couple made their way to Paris where, having fallen on hard times, Tanya played the casinos to keep the family afloat. Ronnie encouraged her to write and her two-volume autobiography, *Russian Child and Russian Wife* in 1949 - the first account of life inside Stalin's Russia - and *Russian Wife Goes West* (1955), made quite a stir in London. Ronnie was recruited by the BBC and sent in the late Fifties to Tunis to cover the Algerian war of indepen-

dence. When Ronnie died in Tunis in 1966, it was to Tanya - by this time with formidable local contacts and knowledge - that the BBC African Service looked to be its reporter.

Tanya Matthews's journalism was pure and simple, with no holds barred. Any other foreign reporter would have been expelled for writing half as much as she got away with. Only she could describe Tunisia as a police state without being hounded on to the first plane. But she was smart - she had an amazing network of influential friends to discourage any rash move by the authorities.

It wasn't unusual to go to dinner with her and find yourself in the company of a dozen or more ambassadors; she collected them. She counted local politicians at the heart of power among her friends too: she had taught many of them English when they were younger. When she was knocked over and hurt by a Tunisian policeman, it was a government minister who rushed to her hospital bedside with a bouquet of flowers almost as large as himself.

Matthews wasn't always easy to work with; she was ferociously competitive, even with her BBC colleagues. She wouldn't speak to me for days after the Tunisian prime minister rescheduled a joint interview. I had been unable to reach her to tell her about the new time because she was out playing golf. She didn't believe I had tried because I was "obviously intent on an exclusive!"

The competitiveness found another outlet in the golf, which she took up in her sixties and became a passion every hit as strong as journalism. She was a familiar sight hacking her way through the dust mounds that pass for a golf course in Tunis every afternoon, invariably giving the ball some "unnatural" propulsion towards the hole.

Before golf there had been table tennis. Apparently, she was an outstanding player in her youth in the Caucasus. She delighted in thrashing her ambassador friends until one day the Chinese ambassador challenged her to play his young com-

panion. He turned out to be a member of the national youth squad. Matthews, for once, was speechless.

She was stunningly attractive as a younger woman and extremely elegant in old age. She was a working journalist to the very end. Although in poor health for some time, and despite an operation which had affected her voice, she continued to send her reports by phone to London. Only a few weeks before her death, she sent a despatch relating how she had got her greatest scoop, the coup against Bourguiba. There seemed to be no reason for her to file it at the time; but, fortunately it had been recorded and on the day she died, the BBC African Service broadcast the piece on its evening transmission. She would have liked that.

PAUL LEGG

Tatiana Svetlova Borissova (Tanya Matthews), journalist and author; born Grozny, Russia 31 August 1913; MBE 1997; twice married (one son, one daughter; and one adopted son); died Tunis 3 March 1999.

Paul Wagaba

ON 1 March the tragic news broke that in a brutal bid for international publicity Rwandan rebels had stormed the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park headquarters in Uganda and killed eight tourists and one Ugandan. A great deal was reported at the time about the tourists who died but there was barely a mention of Paul Wagaba, a park warden, who was murdered during the assault.

Wagaba deserves to be remembered not just for his heroic actions defending the tourists, but also for the outstanding contribution he made to the conservation of Bwindi Park, famous as home to over half of the world's 650 remaining mountain gorillas.

Born in the Mpigi District of Uganda in 1966, Paul Wagaba became a talented student and grad-

uated at the top of his class at the Katwe Wildlife College. Dennis Babasa, his professor there, remembers him as one of the brightest students he ever taught and an especially skilled communicator. He was ideally suited for his role as Community Conservation Warden at Bwindi Park which he took up in 1995, and where he was given the task of bringing the local people on board to help protect the forest.

Set up as a National Park in 1991, Bwindi faced an uncertain future. It had become a forest island, surrounded by agricultural land in one of the most densely populated regions of central Africa. It also bordered Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, a region wracked by civil war.

When the park was founded, relations with local communities were

at a very low point. People were accustomed to taking what they needed from the park and they resented the loss of access to a forest which they depended upon for essential resources such as medicines and agricultural products. The park was threatened by encroachment and the gorilla population was in decline.

Wagaba played a critical role in helping to forge unprecedented agreements between local people and the park to give the communities controlled access to non-timber resources in Bwindi. By doing so he was helping to secure the future not only of the park but also of the local people.

In addition he worked closely with many of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that had community-based projects in the park, including those run by WWF, Care-

DTC and the Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation.

By last year, encroachment into the park had ceased and the gorilla population had at last stabilised. This was a major achievement in such a poverty-stricken and unstable region and stands as a classic case study of how conservation can be achieved by addressing the development needs of the local people.

Wagaba firmly believed in passing these conservation values on to future generations and invested considerable time presenting conservation education programmes to children living in the area and to school groups visiting Bwindi. He was known as an excellent communicator and people of all ages and all parts of society liked and trusted him.

A long-time friend and colleague, Benon Muganyizi, described how

Wagaba served as a role model to the junior wardens and rangers working with him, always willing to offer guidance and help them overcome problems. A colleague from the Uganda Wildlife Authority said, "He was the kind of man who would try to mediate in any conflict. The rebels would not have welcomed that."

Although the tragic incident at Bwindi is likely to lead to a serious decline in eco-tourism and a consequent reduction in the capacity of the Ugandan Wildlife Authority to conduct conservation work all over the country, Wagaba has left behind a legacy of strong community relations which provide some hope for Bwindi Park.

Paul Wagaba was the last surviving child of 12 brothers and sisters and leaves behind a wife and five children, the youngest of whom is 18

months old. He was buried on 5 March near his mother's home in Kasero-Buloba near Kampala.

Wagaba had planned to further his knowledge of park management by taking a diploma at the Mweka College of Wildlife Management in Tanzania. Considering his strong interest in education and the crucial need for training local people of his culture, a scholarship scheme is being set up in his name at Mweka College so that other young Ugandans can carry on his work. Contributions can be made to WWF-UK, Panda House, Weyside Park, Godalming GU7 1XR.

EDWARD MATTHEW

Paul Wagaba, conservationist; born Mpigi District, Uganda 1966; married (five children); died Bwindi, Uganda 1 March 1999.

JP 11/15/99

Sidney Gottlieb

SIDNEY GOTTLIEB was living a life of contradiction. He was a brilliant, witty, and charming man, but he was also a man who was not afraid to take risks. He was a man who was not afraid to take risks.

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Jock Govan



"When Jock Govan took his teeth out he meant business". Govan in action against Celtic

IN THE immediate post-Second-World War and pre-television years, there was a limit to football entertainment. And nowhere was better entertainment to be found than at Easter Road, Edinburgh; capacity crowds of 55,000 were common, and parents of young teenagers like me had not the slightest hesitation in letting us go to matches with our friends, in the knowledge that no harm would come to us on the terraces.

Humour prevailed; there was no violence, nor did it occur to the crowd to be more than verbally and wittily ribald to opposing supporters. The chairman of Hibernian Football Club, the late and great Harry Swan, had his birth certificate at the ready to wave to any of the crowd who, as a ritual when things were going badly for Hibs, would shout epithets casting doubt on Swan's parentage.

Up front for Hibernian Football Club, Scottish champions in 1947/48, were the Famous Five, lovingly remembered to this day in Edinburgh and the Lothians: Gordon Smith, the artist, Bobby Johnston, the schemer, Lawrie Reilly, arguably the best centre forward ever to don a Scotland shirt, Eddie Turnbull, the powerhouse, and Willy Ormond, later the successful manager of the Scottish international team. Behind them was a large, mop-toped, mining engineer, Jock Govan.

Eddie Turnbull recalled: "Govan was a good entertainer, wholehearted, and gave everything he had. He was extremely skilful for a big man." He reflected, "If Govan had been playing the 4-4-2 he would have been a riot as an overlapping full back. But he was told by Harry Swan not to go beyond the halfway line - and that was after he had scored two goals for us from the full back position in the first six games."

Govan was born in Larkhall, that Lanarkshire mining town cradle for so many footballers, of a father who had 21 bullet wounds in his body to show for his time in the trenches of the First World War, and who became a shoemaker/cobbler. Educated at Larkhall Academy, Govan came into contact with the ever-encouraging chemistry teacher Willie Herbinson - brother of the future cabinet minister Peggy Herbinson - who was in charge of football.

Halfway through his seven-year-long mining engineer apprenticeship, as a 20-year-old, Govan got a lucky break, when the regular first team full-back David Shaw had a temporary cartilage problem. For Jimmy Kerr, 16 years the Hibs regular goalkeeper, Govan was not only a great friend, but a full back, displaying intelligent consideration for his "keeper".

Govan made the most of his luck, enhanced by the fact that the team captain for many matches was a guest player,

warrant officer Matt Busby, temporarily stationed in wartime Edinburgh. Even then his benign influence and qualities of leadership made an indelible impression on the young players.

My father-in-law, John Wheatley, who hardly missed a Hibs home match and who as an appeal court judge conducted the inquiry into the 1970 Ibrox disaster and safety at football grounds, was no mean judge of a player. He reckoned Govan made a massive contribution to the Hibernian league and cup-winning teams of the late 1940s. Wheatley thought he was not only a great entertainer, with an enormous punt when required, but displayed a shrewd football brain.

For Lawrie Reilly, "Jock was probably one of the best full-backs with whom I ever played. He was very fast and he was capable of long strikes." Reilly added that they were room mates on the Hibernian extended tour of North America in 1949 and that Govan was a man of no airs and graces. He was also a fine athlete, good at snooker, good at bowls, with an excellent eye for a ball. And, quipped Reilly: "When Jock Govan took his teeth out, he meant business and I

was thankful that he was always on my side!"

Although he won caps against Wales, Switzerland, Belgium, France and Northern Ireland, the apex of Govan's career came on 10 April 1948 when I was among the 135,000 who squeezed into Hampden Park, Scotland lost 2-0 - but it was the best England side that ever I saw. I read Frank Swift in goal, Laurie Scott and George Hardwick the captain, Billy Wright, Neil Franklin, and Harry Cockburn, Stanley Matthews, Stanley Mortenson, Tommy Lawton, Stan Pearson and Tom Finney.

Poor Govan got the blame for the first of the two England goals. This is how the association football correspondent of the Press Association reported it: "When all else is forgotten we shall remember the move that suddenly and quite against the run of play put England into the lead a minute before half time. Swift found Lawton with a clearance, the centre forward flicked the ball to Pearson and Finney, taking a perfect through-pass in his stride, beat Wright and Govan by balance and footwork to shoot magnificently past Beck. The ball had in fact travelled from the England goal area into the Scottish net without a Scottish player touching it, and so England

went in for the interval with a goal out of the textbook and out of the blue.

The consensus of opinion in Scotland by Monday morning was that stopping the then young Tom Finney at his rampant best was easier said than done and that George Young of the Rangers and Jock Govan should be forgiven.

The PA correspondent added: "Scotland's basic plan was certainly a success up to the moment Finney altered the course of events, but their forwards had failed to push home the advantage. Govan, Shaw, Young, and Macaulay had gained for them."

After his football career ended Jock Govan got a job with Ferranti's in Crewe Toll, the weapons division, in Edinburgh. Later he returned to work as a mining engineer. For his last six years he was housebound, lovingly cared for by his wife Betty; she related that, even then, his humour never deserted him.

TAM DALYELL

Thomas ("Jock") Govan, footballer and mining engineer, born Larkhall, Lanarkshire 16 January 1923; married Betty West (one son, one daughter); died Edinburgh 19 February 1999.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES

JOHN GRIBBIN

Universal problem solved with triangles

SCIENCE DOESN'T always have to be so complicated that you need a PhD in physics just to understand the question, let alone the answer. Partly through luck, I have recently been involved in a piece of scientific research which addressed one of the fundamental questions - how old is the Universe - and provided an answer using the same elementary geometry that surveyors use in measuring distances by triangulation.

I admit that the breakthrough would not have been possible without access to a pretty sophisticated "theodolite" - the Hubble Space Telescope (HST), orbiting above the Earth's atmosphere. But the way we made the measurement is schoolroom science.

We know the Universe is expanding because of the famous redshift in the light from distant galaxies, which tells us they are moving apart. Clearly, in that case there was a time, long ago, when they were all piled on top of each other - the Big Bang, in which the Universe was born. But, in order to find out when that happened, we need to know the distances to galaxies, as well as their speeds. Then, working out how long it has been since the Big Bang is as simple as working out how long it takes to get from one motorway junction to another in a car travelling at 50mph if the two

junctions are 50 miles apart. Since redshifts are known, distances are the key to the age of the Universe. But how do you measure distances to galaxies?

The galaxies we are interested in are disc-shaped star systems like our Milky Way, typically about 100,000 light years across (so it takes light 100,000 years to get from one side to the other) and each containing several hundred billion stars like the Sun. Even the nearest of these disc galaxies are millions of light years away, and it takes the power of the HST to pick out even the brighter individual stars within those galaxies.

But, with the aid of the HST, comparing the brightness of individual stars in nearby galaxies with essentially identical stars in our Milky Way is possible. By the mid-1990s, to measure accurate distances to those nearby galaxies. This answered a question that had nagged astronomers for decades. Were the other disc galaxies big objects like the Milky Way, and relatively far away, or smaller islands in space, relatively nearby? It turns out that they are big and distant, and that the Milky Way is almost exactly average in size.

But distances to the nearest galaxies are not enough to tell us how the Universe as a whole is expanding. Happily, though, there are thousands of disc galaxies, all with

known redshifts, so far away that even the HST could not pick out individual stars in them, but for which telescopes on Earth (and the HST) can measure their angular size (the apparent width of the disc) on the sky. Because (thanks to the HST) we now know the range of sizes of disc galaxies, Simon Goodwin, Martin Hendry and I were able to calculate distances to these more distant objects, representative of the Universe at large, from how small they look on the sky.

I am always reminded of the classic episode of the television comedy *Father Ted* where Ted tries to explain to Dougal the difference in size between a toy model of a cow in his hand, and a live cow on the far side of a field. Big things look small when far away. It's just a matter of perspective - and if we know how big galaxies really are, we know how far away they are from the angle each one subtends on the sky.

And that - really - is all there is to measuring the age of the Universe. The answer, if you really want to know, comes out as between 13 and 16 billion years (three to four times the age of the Earth), which, happily, is comfortably older than the ages of the oldest stars. And it's all done with triangles.

John Gribbin is the author of *The Birth of Time* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20)

Tania

IF THE message and the music of tango is a way of life, as many in Buenos Aires like to believe, then the city's passion for its own mouse creation is part of the legend that cities make for themselves. "Tania" was one of its most legendary tango singers. She was born Ana Luciano Davis in Toledo, Spain, in 1901, and left Davis, where she was known as "La Luciani", "Tania Visi", and "Tania Mexican", to arrive in Buenos Aires in 1924, apparently aged 21. She was a member of the "Troupe Iberica", a song-and-dance group performing at the Casino theatre, a night haunt once famous and part of the scene that made Buenos Aires known as the "Paris of South America". She stayed on in Buenos Aires and became simply "Tania". In 1927, she became the lover of the musician Enrique Santos Discipolo, tango composer and lyricist, the author of some of the most trenchant social comment in the tango spectrum - one of which, "Cambalache", written in 1935, was banned by the dictatorship in 1976. Discipolo called Tania his muse. They didn't marry, but she never left his side until his death at 50, in December 1951.

Tania's career took off in the 1930s, at the Buenos Aires version of the Parisian Folies Bergere (the French name was used). She sang the compositions of all the tango greats, Anibal Troilo, Enrique Cadiz, Osvaldo Miranda, Homero Manzi, Francisco Canaro, and became a radio star, then toured cities in Spain, France and the United States.

She declined after Discipolo's death, in part because of the political rejection he suffered for having become a supporter of the dictator Juan Domingo Peron and the Peronist regime which was overthrown in 1955. In the 1960s, tango went out of fashion and really did not come back into full popular appeal until the early 1980s, when the fashion spread world-wide.

By then, it was Tania's recordings from the 1930s that became popular listening and part of the legend. And she lived on this legendary appeal to the very end.

ANDREW GRAHAM-YOOLL
Ana Luciano Davis ("Tania"), tango singer, born Toledo, Spain 1901; died Buenos Aires 17 February 1999.



Tania: sang the tango greats

Extent of waiver of professional privilege

TUESDAY LAW REPORT 16 MARCH 1999

Paragon Finance plc (formerly known as National Home Loans Corporation plc) and others v Freshfields (a firm)
Court of Appeal (Lord Bingham of Cornhill CJ, Lord Justice Brooke and Lord Justice Chadwick)
11 March 1999

THE WAIVER of legal professional privilege, implicit in the bringing of proceedings by a former client against a former solicitor alleging negligence in the handling of a commercial transaction between the client and a third party, did not extend to confidential communications between the client and a different solicitor instructed to pursue the claim against the third party.

The Court of Appeal allowed the plaintiffs' appeal against an order requiring them to disclose to the defendant certain confidential communications between themselves and their solicitors.

The plaintiffs, who were mortgage lenders, claimed damages for professional negligence from the defendant firm of solicitors, which had formerly acted for them in connection with insurance claims arising out of defaults on mortgages. The defendant had withdrawn as the plaintiffs' solicitor in 1993, and thereafter Slaughter & May had acted for the plaintiffs.

The defendant strongly contested the allegations of negligence made by the plaintiffs. The defendant sought disclosure of certain confidential communications between the plaintiffs and Slaughter & May and counsel concerning claims made by the plaintiffs against the insurers and the pursuit and settlement of those claims.

The judge granted the defendant's application, holding that if a client sued his former solicitor, claiming damages for alleged negligence in the handling of a commercial transaction between the client and a

third party, the client's waiver of legal professional privilege, which was implied by the bringing of the proceedings against the former solicitors, applied not only to confidential communications between the client and those former solicitors relating to that transaction, but also to confidential communications between the client and different solicitors whom he later instructed to pursue and settle his claim against the third party. The plaintiffs appealed.

Stewart Boyd QC and Charles Hollander (Slaughter & May) for the plaintiffs; Simon Braume-Wilkinson and Benjamin Thandi (Barlow Lyde & Gilbert) for the defendant.

Lord Bingham CJ, handing down the judgment of the court, said that the protection afforded by legal professional privilege was absolute unless the client, whose privilege

it was, expressly or impliedly waived it.

When a client sued a solicitor who had formerly acted for him in negligence, he invited the court to adjudicate on questions directly arising from the confidential relationship which had formerly subsisted between them.

Since court proceedings were public, the client brought the formerly confidential relationship into the public domain, and thereby waived any right to claim the protection of legal professional privilege in relation to any communication between them so far as necessary for the just determination of his claim.

In the present case the plaintiffs had, by bringing the proceedings, impliedly waived any claim to legal professional privilege in relation to confidential communications between themselves and the defendant concerning the transactions in question up to the moment when the defendant had ceased to act, but had not invited the court to adjudicate on any question arising from their confidential relationship with Slaughter & May.

They had not, therefore, brought that confidential relationship into the public domain. The court was of the clear opinion that the principles in *Lillier v Nalder & Son* (a firm) [1993] 1 All ER 976 and *R v Derby Magistrates' Court*, ex p *B* [1995] 4 All ER 526.

KATE O'HANLON Barrister

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS

VICKERS: On 12 March 1999, in Hampshire, to Elizabeth (née Richard) and Hugo, a son Arthur Hugo Blyth.

DEATHS

WHITMARSH: John Marshall, of Richard's Castle, near Ludlow. On 3 March, peacefully, in his 90th year, after many months of illness. Widower of Betty, much-loved father, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather. Donations to Amnesty International or cancer research, c/o A. Hoskins & Son, 01594 872441.

IN MEMORIAM

BROADBENT: Dad. On the 10th anniversary of your death, loved and greatly missed by your children, Corrie, David, Jo and Kate.

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Ben Ais, actor, 62; Mr Matthew Bannister, Chief Executive, BBC Production, 42; Miss Sybilie Bedford, writer, 58; Miss Teresa Berganza, mezzo-soprano, 64; Mr Bernardo Bertolucci, film director, 58; The Right Rev Hugo de Waal, Bishop of Theford, 64; Sir John Drinkwater QC, a Commissioner of Income Tax, 74; Sir Philip Foreman, former chairman, Short Bros, 76; The Right Rev Peter Forster, Bishop of Chester, 49; Air Chief Marshal Sir Christopher Foxley-Norris, Chairman Emeritus, Cheshire Foundation, 82; Mr David Heath MP, 45; Mr Ramon Hnatyshyn, former Governor-General of Canada, 65; Sir Ewart Jones, Emeritus Professor of Chemistry, Oxford University, 88; Sir Anthony Kenny, Warden, Rhodes House, 68; Mr Jerry Lewis, comedian, 73; Mr Leo McKern, actor, 79; Miss Kate

Nelligan, actress, 48; Mr Richard Pattick, former chairman, Taylor Woodrow, 83; Miss Bridget Rowe, former managing director, *Sunday Mirror* and *The People*, 48.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Georg Simon Ohm, physicist, 1787; Sir John Lavery, painter, 1856. Deaths: Tiberius Claudius Nero, Roman emperor, 37; Aubrey Vincent Beardsley, artist and illustrator, 1898. On this day: the first Football Association Cup Final was played, at Kennington Oval, when the Wanderers beat the Royal Engineers 1-0, 1872; the New English Bible (Old Testament), a new translation, was published, 1961. Today is the Feast Day of St Abraham Kidanemariam, St Eusebia of Hamaga, St Fimian Lobhair (The Loper), St Gregory Makar, St Haribert of Cologne and St Julian of Autboch.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Rebecca Lyons, "Ingres and ... (G): Ingres and Delacroix", 1pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Marie Claude Elliot, "Nature and Landscape in 19th-century Britain", 2pm. Tate Gallery: James Heard, "Drawing the Body: and of the academies", 1pm. British Museum: Eleanor Robson, "Investigating Ancient Near Eastern Science", 3pm.

DINNERS

European-Atlantic Group: The Turkish ambassador, Mr Ozdem Sanberk, was the speaker at a European-Atlantic Group dinner-discussion held yesterday at St Ermin's Hotel, London SW1. His subject was "Turkey's Relations with Europe". The Earl of Limerick was the chairman. Sir Michael Burton also spoke.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen holds an investiture at Buckingham Palace. The Duke of Edinburgh, President Emeritus of the World Wide Fund for Nature - WWF International, attends the Heads of State Conference in Cameroon. Prince Edward, Patron, London Mozart Players, attends a concert and dinner at St James's Palace, to mark the orchestra's 50th anniversary. The Duke of Gloucester visits the Royal Mint, Llantrisant, Mid Glamorgan; and as Grand Prior, Order of St John, accompanied by The Duchess of Gloucester, Commandant-in-Chief St John Ambulance Wales, visits Truogor House, Gwent. The Duke and The Duchess of Gloucester visit Clytha Primary School, Gwent; and attend a special celebration service for the installation of the new Chancellor St Woolos Cathedral, Gwent.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard, Horse Guards, Horse Company Scots Guards mount the Queen's Guard, Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Coldstream Guards.

IN THE bar-parlour of the Angler's Rest, Francis Wheen's fatigue at pruning the word "retful" from his life of Marx pales beside that of the Waugh scholar Michael Davies: no sooner had he overcome flu than his wife summoned three double-glazing salesmen, each of whom claimed kinship

WORDS CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE senior, adj.

with the books on the shelves ("I very much enjoy opera myself"). Dave remarks that he has to excise "crucial" from his

prose and recalls that Robert Stephens, the Aristocrat, always asked, "are you a 'however' or 'nevertheless' man?"

Meanwhile, Anthony Sampson said that an American recently called a lapse of memory "a senior moment". Adds Sampson, "I can't recall who it was - a senior moment!"

The turn of the screws

Professional, personable and caring. That's what prison officers think of themselves. Got a problem with that? By Angela Devlin

The "screw" occupies a special place in popular culture. In prison slang, there are at least 30 words for a prison officer, from rhyming slang (Scoobydoo), Dr Who, four-be-two, kangaroo) to direct abuse. Television gives us *Porridge's* Mackay and *Cell Block H's* Freak, and news coverage focuses on negative aspects such as the recent alleged brutality at Wormwood Scrubs. But last night's BBC documentary *Jailbirds* challenged this view, and in May, a new ITV drama series (also called *Jailbirds* but set in a fictional women's prison) looks set to continue the debate.

The BBC series was filmed at HMP New Hall, a prison in Yorkshire which holds 400 women. The director, Chris Terrill (*HMS Brilliant*, *Soho Stories*, *The Cruise*), was given eight months' unprecedented access to this closed world. He admits that initially he shared the public view of prison officers: "I thought they'd be rough, tough and unsympathetic, with no humanity about them. The reality, I found, is very different. The modern prison officer is professional and caring."

Last night's programme, "Through the Gates", began with a group of women being delivered by van to the jail and taken through the reception process by officer Debbie Martin, a 31-year-old who joked her way through the indignities of the mugshot and the strip-search. An older officer spent hours on the phone trying to sort out family problems for newcomer Toni, 28, a heroin addict. A darker side of prison reality began to seep through when Toni attempted suicide and six officers manhandled her along the corridor into a segregation cell. The series explores some challenging issues: in the programme to be screened on Easter Wednesday, the Governor, Mike Goodwin, confronts a self-mutilating prisoner in a manner that viewers may find shocking.

I asked six women ex-prisoners and six prison officers what they thought of last night's programme. All the prisoners strongly disapproved of Governor Goodwin. Kay is in her sixties and has served time in Holloway and HMP Bullwood Hall in Essex. "The male officers resort to sarcasm because most of them are either embarrassed or frightened of women prisoners."

Marie, 42, did seven months in Holloway and Bullwood Hall in Essex for cannabis offences. "The reception officer, Debbie, talked to that new prisoner like a kid even though the woman was older than her," she said. "Comments like that are typical and they're just what you don't need when you get to prison."

"Most of the screws aren't sensitive to your problems because they just don't have the imagination to put themselves in your position and consider what you might be feeling like. They regard you as different, criminal, not proper human beings. They gossip about what you're in for, but they're not interested in the problems that got you into trouble in the first place."

At HMP Cookham Wood in Kent, the Governor, Colette Kershaw, disagrees: "My officers would have no



Debbie Martin, above left, described as 'laughing and joking her way through a strip search' in *Jailbirds*, is a far cry from the dated image of female warders in TV's *Prisoner: Cell Block H*



knowledge of a prisoner's offence, unless they'd been assigned to a woman as her personal officer."

Kershaw feels that although *Jailbirds* gives a fair picture of prison life, viewers may miss the underlying tensions: "Officers find certain parts of their work, like the strip-search, just as distasteful as the prisoners do. You can do it in a cold, clinical, professional way, but a lot of officers feel it helps to make a bit of a joke to avoid embarrassment on both sides and relieve the tension."

"It's all about forming relationships," says a male officer, "but that's done later, not at the reception process when a lot of the women are in too much shock to talk. Once they're settled in, they'll be given a personal officer, with whom you hope they will form a trusting relationship. I've been in the Prison Service 23 years and the work now is far more interesting because you get more involved with the prisoners."

Anne, a younger officer, says it's important to define the officer's

exact role: "Of course there'll always be a divide, but you can still establish a rapport. I say to the women: 'I didn't put you in here. The judge and jury did that. It's my job to look after you in here.'"

So what makes a good prison officer? Governor Kershaw and her staff were unanimous: common sense, a sense of humour and good communications skills. As Officer Anne put it: "You've got to be caring and sensitive to prisoners' needs. But then there's the other side, like locking people up and using restraint techniques to take them to the segregation unit. That side of it has to be done with absolute professionalism following the set rules. But you can still personalise it."

"A third of our prisoners here are foreign nationals and we're encouraged to say good morning to each woman in her own language."

"And we do try to influence policy," adds Governor Kershaw. "For instance, most of us think it's terrible that foreign drugs mules can't be

held in open prisons. I've made that view known to the Prison Service."

The prisoners agree that personal relationships are what count: "What you want is someone with a bit of experience of life. You want kind-hearted older men and women who can sympathise with your situation

'The male officers are either embarrassed or frightened of women prisoners'

and bend the rules now and then."

The women were acutely aware of officers' language and tone of voice; they resented the way the New Hall staff bawled out women's surnames. Language is a powerful indicator of an establishment's culture: the actors in ITV's *Jailbirds*

were shocked when they were taken to HMP Winchester's women's unit to get a taste of prison life. "We turned up at lunchtime and were told the women were 'feeding'," says Debra Stephenson, who plays a lifer.

Jack Ellis played DI Muddiman in *Prime Suspect* but he is finding his role as a prison officer much more challenging: "We had a prison officer on set to advise us and I was shocked when she showed me how to jangle my keys in front of prisoners to wind them up. I also had to learn a swaggering walk - because you're authority, you're power. You can feel that power and it's destructive. I shout, 'Shut it!' on set and all the noise stops. It feels wonderful."

Chris Tchaikovsky and her staff at Women in Prison have been advising the ITV scriptwriters on language and storylines, and she is delighted that so much TV coverage will bring the issue of women's imprisonment into everyone's living room. "Now viewers will see the reality of prison life," she says. "Five

hours of TV could achieve more than all our 15 years of campaigning. The institution of prison is brutalising, but it's easy for us to criticise the staff. Control and care just don't go together very well and any amount of training won't help if an officer has to turn the key on a woman who's just learnt that something awful has happened to her child."

The officers agreed that the prison officer's job has moved a long way from the old turnkey's and is far more demanding. But entry qualifications are still low. A 20-year-old with five GCSE passes can be earning up to £17,000 a year after just 11 weeks of training, while a graduate entrant on the fast-track promotion scheme could be deputy governor of a prison, earning up to £31,000, within five years of leaving university.

At the Prison Service Conference in Harrogate last month, the outgoing director-general, Richard Tilt, launched the new Vision mission statement, setting out guidelines for officers to fulfil the Service's twin

aims - to protect the public and to deliver constructive regimes - while dealing fairly, openly and humanely with prisoners. But will these lofty aims prove robust enough to turn the screws and make real changes to prison life? Only 10 days ago 22-year-old Theresa Lohinski was found hanging in her cell at New Hall.

Chris Terrill accepts that it will take time to break down the "nick culture". "I've done a lot of police films and you do find policemen who've joined up because they think they're going to get good fights. Of course you're still going to get those people joining the prison service, but the counter-error is only to look at the thugs. There are plenty of prison officers who are going against the grain to try and change things."

Invisible Women: What's wrong with Women's Prisons, and *Going Straight: After Crime and Punishment*, by Angela Devlin, are published by Waterside Press, Winchester

The college that ate my brain

Exams, essays, more exams... everyone's listless, bar lovestruck Alistair. By Cayte Williams

THEY'RE HALFWAY through the second year, and the students are suffering from mid-course lethargy. The exams they took at the beginning of the year are over, but now they're supposed to be preparing for the next job lot in May.

Even self-improvement disciple Ian has had enough. "I'm 50 far behind just because I'm being lazy," he sighs. "I've missed a few lectures, and I've got essays and a dissertation to hand in." To him, education is just one great big treadmill and he wants to get off. "College is eating away at my brain. I'm sick of reading and doing essays. I want to experience real life. I'm doing the same thing over and over, reading textbooks and taking exams. I'm taking a year out next year, because if I go into my third year like I feel now I'll get a bad grade."

Still, he's remaining optimistic about the quality of life when he graduates. "When I finish college and

take a full-time job, it'll be one which keeps me entertained all the time," he says emphatically. "I've got friends who say as long as they've got tons of money, they don't care how bored they are. But I'm never going to have a boring career that pays well, because I could be doing that for the rest of my life. I'd rather do a bar job."

Even Robbie, who wants to make his fortune in the City, is getting a bit weary of ambition. "I'm halfway through my course and exams are looming again,"

THIS STUDENT LIFE



SPRING TERM, WEEK 10 AT THE MANCHESTER STUDENT HOUSE



RACHAEL
studying
Art History



IAN
studying
Geography



ROBBIE
studying
Economics



DAVID
studying
Management



DANI
studying
Biology



LEONA
was studying
Maths



ALISTAIR
studying
Management



TASH
studying
Management



ROSIE
studying
French

he explains. "What keeps me going is knowing that if I don't do the work now I'll be in trouble later." And Rosie, the hardest-working girl in the house, can't even get out of bed in the mornings. "I don't want to think about exams, but I've got them in 10 weeks," she says. "All these essays have arrived and I'm lagging behind a bit. All I do is worry but I don't do anything about it."

While Robbie and David have been going to the gym and the girls have been slobbering out, Alistair has

been getting exercise re-vamping his room. The future might not look great but the present is marvellous. Alistair is in love, and it shows in his decor. "You should see his room," laughs Leona. "His girlfriend, Tori, came over from the States last Friday and he's put in a lot of effort. He's put pictures up on the walls, made velvet curtains and spring-cleaned everywhere. It's quite impressive really." Rosie's equally stunned. "He's so messy normally I can't quite believe it."

So what's this Tori like? "She's very American but she's very nice," says Leona. "When we met her on Saturday, we all just stared at her because of her accent."

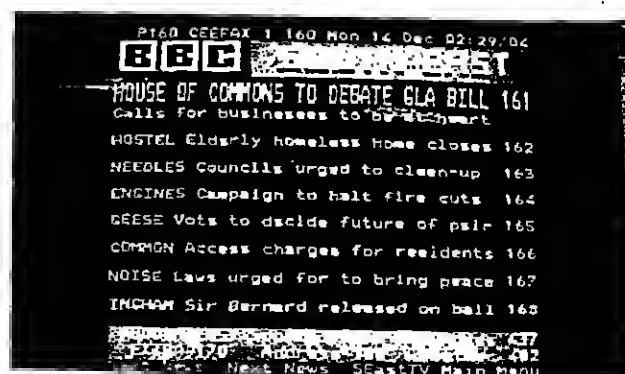
Alistair's been taking Tori on a whirlwind trip around Britain, ending up with a trip to London to see *West Side Story* and a final romantic weekend in Manchester - hence the velvet curtains. He says cheerfully, "I've been making a love nest."

THE JOYS OF MODERN LIFE

37. CEEFAX BY ANDREW MUELLER

THE RECENT furore about the rescheduling of *News at Ten* is indicative of a spectacular failure by commentators to understand that it no longer really matters what time the daily television news bulletin goes out. Ceefax, and its equivalent services, like Teletext and Skytext, are now prevalent, will become ubiquitous, and mean that we can have the news whenever we feel like it. It is a pretty safe bet that for most Britons, the first they heard of the death of Princess Diana was not the grave, stentorian baritone of a BBC announcer, but a digitised headline on their television screen, glimpsed through the fog of a Sunday morning hangover.

When we want to know what's going on in the world, the BBC's Ceefax has become our first port of call, its three-digit codes now as swift and sure within us as reflexes (101 for news, 302 for football, 340 for cricket, 400 for weather, 600 for television listings). As an information source, Ceefax is faster than radio, quicker to the point than print, and far less hassle than the Internet. Uniquely among the media, it tells us what we want to know, whenever we want to know it. And it does subtitles - invaluable during Eurovision, and on the frequent occasions that the dialogue on *Brookside* be-



Ceefax: a sort of Internet for idiots

comes unbearable to listen to. Granted, Ceefax's news coverage lacks a certain depth, but as a bluffer's guide to the events of the day, it's unbeatable. The unapologetic editors behind Ceefax's screens are capable of laconic reductionism that verges on haiku. They condense the most perplexing intricacies of stories concerning politics, economics, finance and sport - and the occasional skateboarding dog - into digestible terse 80-word grabs.

However, the real joys of Ceefax and Teletext are to be found among their more obscure codes. Teletext's news and sport phone polls (326 and 188 respectively) are always a thought-provoking means of keeping oneself amused during a commercial break, even if the thought they most provoke is

"Who are the 4,505 people who not only care whether or not Camilla Parker Bowles goes to Prince Edward's wedding, but care enough to spend 12p on phoning in their opinion, and what steps can be taken to avoid them?" Ceefax and Channel 4's Teletext also offer pages respectively *The Vibe* at 561 and *The Void* at 482 that allow self-righteous adolescents to defend their tastes in pop music.

Ceefax is a glorious sedentary pleasure, a sort of Internet for idiots that manages the cherishable combination of being relaxing and addictive. The modern world offers few exercises as calming as listening to soothing music on a Saturday afternoon while watching the football scores silently tick over on the screen.

150

WS
h-that? By Angela Devlin

How Handel got his groove back

Composers' reputations rise and fall, but few have enjoyed such a boom as that of George Frideric Handel. Audiences now flock to operas thought unstageable 20 years ago. By Jonathan Keates

It is spring, or as near as dammit, despite floods in Yorkshire and frosts everywhere else, and here comes another London Handel Festival. The Programme of oratorio, cantatas and concertos at St George's Hanover Square, where the composer was once churchwarden, is balanced by performances at the Royal College of Music's Britten Theatre of his rarely-heard opera, *Lotario*.

A tale of dynastic skulduggery in early medieval Italy, it includes a stupendous *coup de théâtre* in which the scheming Queen Matilde forces hapless Princess Adelaide to choose between marrying her dim, weedy son Idelberto or else committing suicide. Matilde, providing for every contingency, has brought with her a dagger and a poisoned cup. Choosing the latter, Adelaide prepares to drink, when, to both women's astonishment, Idelberto rushes in, brandishing a sword and threatening to kill himself if she so much as touches a drop.

Not so very long ago, when the London Handel Festival began, a month-long concert series almost entirely devoted to the composer's music, and including a professional production of a minor stage work which flopped at its first performance, would have looked very much like special pleading. Since the 19th century, when extra trains were laid on for Londoners flocking to the Crystal Palace to hear his oratorios performed by mass choirs and monster orchestras, Handel's reputation had taken a nosedive. For most of the musical public, whether in Britain or abroad, his image was little better than that of a facile timesmith with the good luck to have written *Messiah* and the *Water Music*—and the misfortune to have been born in the same year as JS Bach.

Musical orthodoxy decreed that the inevitable compare-and-contrast exercise between the two composers always worked to Handel's disadvantage. Bach emerged as the model scholar, who got everything right because he worked it out neatly in advance. Handel was the naughty boy, slapdash, half-hearted, cutting corners and cheating off others. It never seems to have struck those making this ultimately pointless comparison that the two men were distinct creative personalities, writing for vastly differing audiences. To a lot of people who ought to know better, one German Baroque composer in a big white wig looks very like another.

By the 1985 tercentenary commemoration of his birth, Handel had become a classic victim of what might be called the

iceberg syndrome, in which only a fraction of an artist's best work is visible above the waterline of neglect. The great dramatic oratorios, works like *Athalia*, *Solomon* and *Belshazzar*, hung on here and there, though their occasional performances at the Proms or the Queen Elizabeth Hall were risk ventures, "box office poison" in concert-promoter speak. How, in any case, was it possible to make them work under the impacted dust of Victorian evangelical piety, and memories of pneumatic contraltos in flowered hats gurgling into the rafters of some provincial Corn Exchange?

An even worse fate had overtaken Handel's operas. Conventional wisdom (aka cultural indolence and incuriosity) long ago decided that these were resistant to any serious presentation on a contemporary stage. The standard Baroque aria form, with its reprise of the opening material

Singers love Handel for his gift for flattering even the most mediocre voice so as to burnish it with star quality

after a middle section in a different key, was felt to be a strain both on dramatic credibility and on an audience's ability to stay awake. Long passages of harpsichord-accompanied recitative might be tolerable in Mozart, but as employed by Handel they were simply an effective reminder of the ways in which opera, with the aid of a little Wagnerian *Vorsprung durch Technik*, had streamlined itself since his day.

The plots, with their female warriors, magic islands and long-lost brothers identified by strawberry marks, were fatuous, happening in a classical never-never land inhabited by people whose names, Bradamante, Cleofide, Polinesso, sounded like Formula One racing cars or different types of pasta sauce. There were no choices worth speaking of and hardly any ensembles, while the orchestra was just a mimsy little combo of fiddles and oboes. Finally, since the male principals, at the opera's earliest performances, had mostly been Italian eunuchs, how could we possibly do these works justice? As one Handel scholar so neatly put it, "nowadays there is no humane answer to the castrato problem."

Now and then, an enterprising revival showed how bogus or else purely non-

sensical such ideas of Handel opera actually were. A Decca recording of *Alcina*, made in 1963 as a vehicle for Joan Sutherland, quickly became a classic for its thrilling vocal realisation, of the opera's eroticism and emotional ambivalence. Every autumn at Sadler's Wells the Handel Opera Society used to feature selected stage works, whose am-dram milk-bottle-tops-and-string production values were offset by a line-up of superb soloists. Down at the Unicorn Theatre in Abingdon, meanwhile, the husband-and-wife team Alan and Frances Kitching made Handelian operatic miracles happen on an even tinier stage and the proverbial shoestring budget, with the help of an undergraduate band in the pit and monsters played by local schoolkids. If it wasn't exactly the King's Theatre Haymarket, where many of the operas received their premieres with stellar casts and an orchestra of international virtuosi, we were grateful, all the same, for a chance to hear the music.

How did this all change "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye", as the bass soloist famously thunders in *Messiah*? Which particular spot in the late-20th century Zeitgeist did Handel succeed in hitting during those 1985 tercentennial junketings, to get himself out of the reference books and back on the stage where he belongs? The revival of authentic performance practice in Baroque music undoubtedly helped, revealing that with the more grainy, physical sound of a small ensemble of period instruments, alert to heady rhythms and keen phrasing, Handel's notes can make your hair stand on end. As if to prove the point, labels like Harmonia Mundi, L'Oiseau Lyre and Hyperion began pampering us with works such as *Joshua*, *Giustino* and the incidental music to Smollett's lost play *Alceste*, not exactly Desert Island essentials but welcome nonetheless.

Handel, meanwhile, has become a class act in the world's major opera houses, so much so indeed that certain pieces like *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* and *Ariodante* are fast achieving standard status in the international repertoire. Opera North is limbering up for *Radamisto*, 1720s London's hit show, ENO has a new production of *Semele* and there's talk of an *Agrippina* with Lesley Garrett. It's at Glyndebourne, however, where the spectacular breakthrough has been made in winning new audiences for Handel. *Theodora*, not written for the theatre and with more meditation than confrontation, was the surprise winner of the 1996 season, and last year's 1930s



George Frideric Handel: 'Shakespearean' in the array of emotion and character his imagination unfolds

Hollywood-style *Rodelinda* had its impact sharpened by the star counter-tenor Andreas Scholl and the designer glamour of Anna Caterina Antonacci in the title role. Audiences in Edinburgh and London, revealing in the wayward inspirations of choreographer Mark Morris's *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, found themselves captivated as much by the unfamiliar score's kaleidoscopic tone-painting as by the beauty of the dance itself.

Oh, and let's not forget *My Night With Handel*, a cheekily brilliant C4 film by Alex Marengo and Debra Hauer, setting a collage of hit numbers against backdrops of Soho nightlife and a Richard Rogers-Norman Foster Londonscape in which the music seemed perfectly at home. Suddenly Handel is everywhere, with or without the white wig. Even TV commercials feature snippets of *Zadok the Priest* and the *Opus 3 concerti Grossi*. So what explains our ardent embrace of the composer we formerly either spurned or ignored?

Singers have always loved Handel because of his gift, noted by contemporaries, for coaxing and flattering even the most mediocre voice so as to burnish it with genuine star quality. Audiences entering the opera house with preconceived ideas as to the dullness of *da capo* arias cave in, overwhelmed by the unforgettable potency of his melodic lines. Cutting-edge directors like David Alden and Peter Sellars speak with such fervour about Handel as a theatre animal that the ink seems scarcely dry on his scores. As for the oratorios, the punters are flocking back without their prayerbooks and dog-collars, and more passionately than those Victorians at Crystal Palace, a veritable soccer crowd indeed, if a recent Proms performance of *Deborah* is anything to go by.

It was Mozart, his admirer and conscious imitator, who spoke of Handel's unique gift for achieving great effects through simple means, and it's Mozart whom he foreshadows in the range of his

moods and sheer formal versatility. Some writers on music like to call him "Shakespearean", because of the massive array of human emotions and character types his imagination unfolds.

A cynic might say that Handel is popular again because his works, with their tiny forces, are so attractively cheap to perform in these cost-cutting times. Audience reaction, surprised and enchanted, suggests there's rather more to it than this. Together with the sophistication and elegance we expect from a man who was a connoisseur of fine paintings and good wine, there's a wisdom and humanity whose grounding in direct personal experience enfolds us all.

A friend of mine, mad for the late Romantic big symphony sound, summed up the effect after sitting through a performance of *Belshazzar*: "You're standing on the edge of a cliff, ready to end it all. Mahler says 'Go on, jump!'—Handel says 'Let's do dinner instead.'"

Cura conducts an experiment

PENNED IN our seats, we expect conductors to act out musical rapture on our behalf, but to sing it as well? That's another matter. Last Thursday, José Cura introduced us to the unusual phenomenon of the Singing Conductor.

The world knows Cura as an operatic tenor of distinction—impetuous perhaps, but the genuine article. In interviews, he reminds us that he came to singing only after studying conducting and composition. Now the success of his vocal apparatus is allowing him to indulge his fantasy of being a conductor, while also taking

OPERA
JOSE CURA/
PHILHARMONIA
ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL
LONDON

the vocal part. How would he manage? Well, without a baton and mostly without a score, for a start. He had taken the sensible precaution of working with the Philharmonia, an orchestra at the top of its game and with a leader, Christopher Warren-Green, who has conducting experience in his own right. Verdi and Puccini

might not be home territory, but few parts of the repertoire hold any fear for this world-class outfit. And if the conductor chooses to spend much of the evening with his back to the players? That can be accommodated.

Cura passed the first test. As he gestured for the musicians to sit, they did—in perfect coordination. A good start. Verdi occupied the evening's first half, beginning with the overture to *La Forza del Destino*, as dramatic an opening as any. Cura's conducting relied on small, contained gestures, and the slow passages almost

ground to a halt; but that might be an interpretative view.

However, there's no singing in the overture, and it was only with Don Alvaro's Scene and Romance from *La Forza* that we got to the crunch. Cura was still facing the players as he began to sing, but then he turned slowly to deliver us the full voice. The effect, though, was ever so slightly absurd, the need to maintain the beat with both arms making him look somewhat like a large bird attempting to achieve flight.

This proved a recurring visual distraction—and a dramatic distortion—with the

added problem that any expansive arm movement produced an equivalent vocal emphasis that disrupted the vocal contour, most damagingly in the free-flowing line of *Simon Boccanegra*.

Nevertheless, Cura's Verdi, and more particularly his Puccini and Leoncavallo ("Vesti la giubba", what else?) from the second half, remained authentic, and although the vocal edge sometimes blurred, he curbed his tendency, born of enthusiasm, to deliver too much, too loud. If one had the impression that Cura's conducting, sometimes achieved from odd places

on the platform, got a little help from Warren-Green, that is, after all, one of the concert-master's functions.

Cura's love of his audience and its adulation does not contradict his seriousness of purpose. This was an interesting, even amusing little experiment—not an unmitigated success, but not a disaster either. I hope that in future he will let someone else conduct so that we get more of the Cura we want. His conducting is perhaps unexceptionable, but also unexceptional. The voice, though, remains special.

NICK KIMBERLEY

Gardener's question time

AYRSHIRE. THE home base of Borderline Theatre, may be renowned for its bacon, but there's rather too much ham being served in the British premiere of *Kevin's Bed*. A major hit at Dublin's Abbey Theatre last year, Bernard Farrell's comedy (its action here transposed from Ireland to Glasgow) follows a middle-class Catholic family from the 1970s to 1999, via the parents' silver and golden anniversary celebrations.

The endlessly dithering Kevin has dropped out from training to be a priest in Rome but parental hopes are briefly revived by the arrival of a young Italian nun come to talk Kevin round. Hopes are then dashed as it transpires that celibacy was the hurdle at which his vocation came a cropper.

25 years on, Kevin is as ineffectual as ever. His shotgun bride, Maria, has become the kind of termagant who surely wouldn't have survived that long, and this time it's his brother John slinking home in disgrace to face the music.

All in all, it's a mediocre sitcom meets lukewarm farce, the characters barely developed beyond plot-ciphers and most of the performances correspondingly overblown and contrived. Farrell's intention appears to be to investigate a quarter-century's social change, but he never digs deep enough, into either his characters and their relationships, or the larger world and his theme resonates no more successfully than much of the humour.

It's a very different story with the Scottish premiere of Iain Heggie's amorous merry-

THEATRE
KEVIN'S BED/
EXPERIENCED WOMAN
GIVES ADVICE
CITIZENS THEATRE
GLASGOW/ROYAL LYCEUM
EDINBURGH

go-round, first produced at Manchester's Royal Exchange in 1995, which positively bristles with humane yet penetrating insight and black-edged wit. Fortysomething Bella attempts to cultivate the back green of a Glasgow tenement block of a Sunday morning but her would-be solitude is continually interrupted by demands from strangers, acquaintances, ex- and current lovers all seeking her counsel, most of which is ignored. Pheromones fly thick and fast as Bella's eye goes roving in response to her younger lover's infidelity, in amongst sundry other lustful encounters over her potting compost.

Heggie's mode is half manically heightened naturalism, half playful symbolism. His quickfire dialogue is delivered with matching depth and spiky character detail by the cast, ably assisted by Jennifer's Black's mercurial Bella. In contrast to Borderline's heavy-handed, lightweight efforts, this is comedy of real heart and substance, its romance and humour only enriched by their bittersweet flavour.

SUE WILSON

'Kevin's Bed', (0141-329 0022) to 27 Mar, on tour to 17 Apr. *'An Experienced Woman Gives Advice'*, (0131-348 4848) to 27 Mar

The long journey Homer

YOU'LL FIND no Cyclops in Nicholas Maw's *Odyssey*, yet its confrontations are every bit as gripping. No Nausicaa, though many a "long-limbed melody". No Circe, but transformation, magic and enchantment galore. No Sirens, but a skein of bewitching tunes that allure, just as Maw's *Scenes and Arias* delighted prommers almost four decades ago. No wrangling suitors, but some of the most virulent writing for woodwind and brass in any recent British score. And a 44-bar melody, sumptuously recapitulated in inverted form near the end by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra strings ("like an old friend" as Simon Rattle put it), that would have had any self-respecting Lotus-Eater hovering on the edge of Nirvana.

CLASSICAL
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Maw's *Odyssey* isn't Homer's, but he has the gifts of a rhapsode of old. His narrative is internal, musical, deliberately unprogrammatic, yet never tires, but flows, capers and switches mood, fills with apprehension and mesmerises as did the hexameters of yore. From the extraordinarily dark introduction, an eerie *Nibelheim* whence tympani and gong, then shadowy divisi double basses, bassoons, a trio of celli, then woodwind chorus well up, you sense this journey will indeed be a long one. There is a powerful sense of anticipation as lower strings well up under horn chords, and an increasing energy and urgency pervades the whole orchestra. It wells up, almost puzzled, just as at the close, magically, it will die down. And

it is this ebb and flow of *Odyssey* that Rattle handled so excitingly in this Symphony Hall performance, just as he achieved on the EMI recording which has achieved unexpected cult status either side of the Atlantic.

Inspired, perhaps, by the eerie grandfather clock "Time chord", with which Maw signposts the sections, Rattle brought the 90-minute piece in dead on time. This was Rattle on shining form, a reading of unalloyed wisdom and intensity, and the CBSO gave him of its best. Maw conjures wonderfully varied sound worlds: the piece bristles with exquisite solo work; time and again, not just the inventive foreground, but the busily elaborate hinterland impresses. Tingling bells, busy clarinets, soft sneaky brass and glimmers of oboe as Part I gradually acquires a feeling of freedom; subtle contrasts

of light and intensity beneath the violin solo interlude, soon eclipsed by angst-ridden trumpets and screaming woodwind. The sense of amen in the air at the start of the wondrously sustained half-hour slow section was palpable; curiously Peter Grimesian chords yield to an unrelenting climax after another; the intermediate string fade-down, with whispers of nocturnal oboe and bassoon and long-riding flute solo, was impeccably done. The exposed violins in the variations—shades almost of the *Grosse Fuge*—ceding to violas over subliminal vibraphone, and the string opening, with added trumpet, to Part 4, were as lucid as anything in the evening. After so much emerging adventure, *Odyssey*'s eloquent subsiding provides a homecoming as serene as one could ask for.

RODERIC DUNNETT



Nicholas Maw: the narrative of 'Odyssey' never tires

Landscapes of nowhere

Like Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko abandoned figurative art. Unlike Pollock, he chose stillness over action. By Richard Ingleby

Last year, America's art-going public had a rare opportunity to see exhibitions by two of the country's most celebrated artists at the same time in the same city. For the month of November, Jackson Pollock at New York's Museum of Modern Art overlapped with Mark Rothko at the Whitney Museum of American Art – the two giants of American art face to face for one last bout. Such is the fragile condition of their paintings that shows on this scale of either artist's work are unlikely to be seen again, but for a few weeks they were back in the ring, slugging it out for the title of America's greatest 20th-century painter.

It was Pollock, apparently, whom the American people took to their hearts – queuing round the block to see his drips and daubs and splashes, while the Rothko show was a quieter affair in every way. The myth of Pollock as the live-fast, die-young, all-American hero has proved an enduring one, and rather more appealing than that of Rothko: the melancholic rabbit.

Both exhibitions have now arrived in Europe (Pollock at the Tate and Rothko at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris), from which distance it is rather easier to take an impartial view of their different achievements. The Pollock exhibition is an undoubtedly majestic and exciting event, but Rothko, too, emerges as a major figure and, setting aside what we know of the man, their work looks evenly matched.

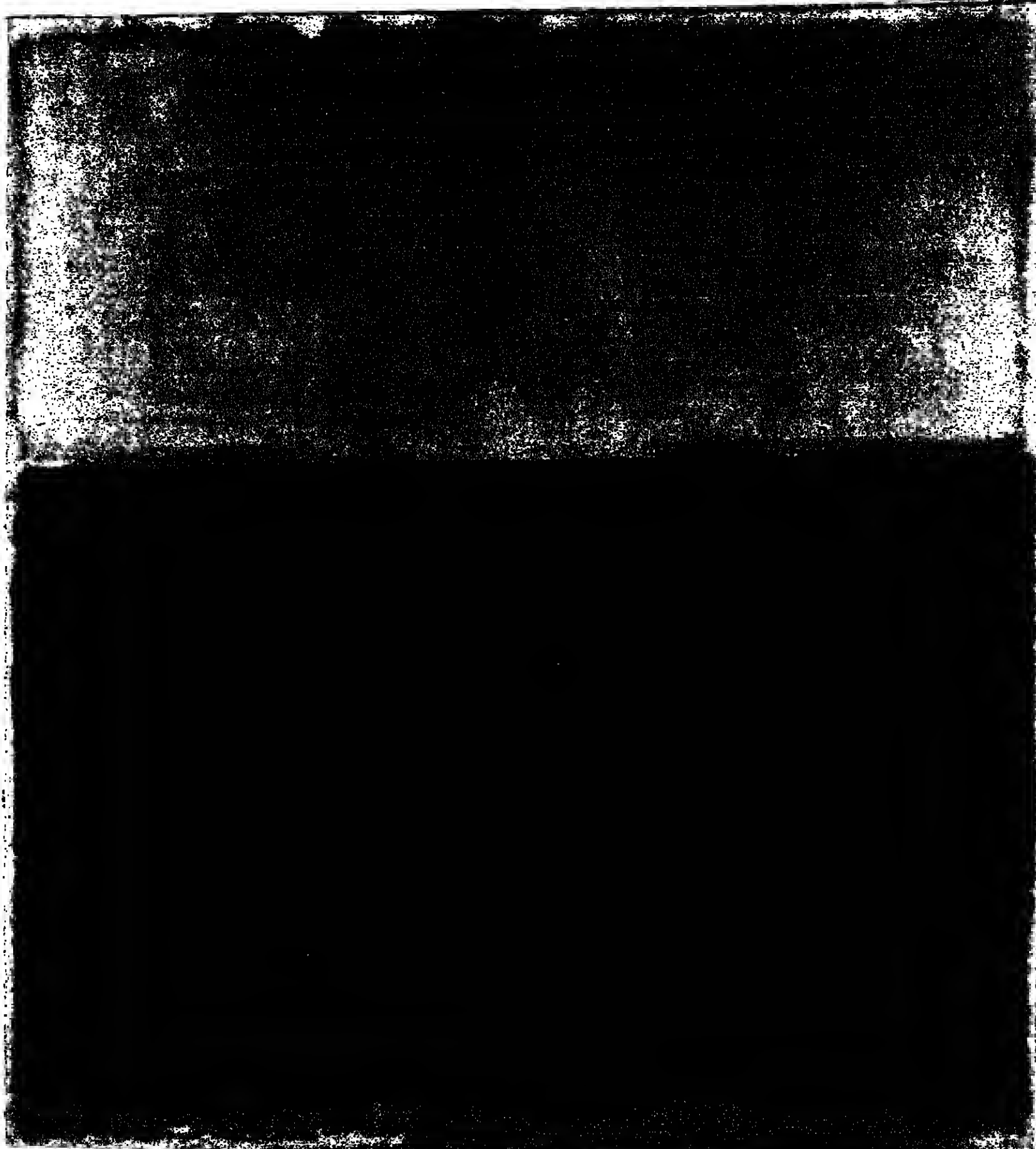
The Rothko show begins in 1935 with a group of works much influenced by his friend and neighbour, Milton Avery: low-key paintings of people in subways and on street corners; a gentle sort of urban realism painted in subtle tones of grey and blue and beige. The selection in Paris is truncated compared to the American showing, but the point is made that Rothko made a quiet, figurative start.

The most striking thing about Rothko's early work is how strongly he, like Pollock, came to be influenced by Picasso and Miró in the 1940s. The two Spaniards loom large over the decade – their work was widely exhibited in New York at the time and their presence deeply felt. Pollock felt Miró lightly and Picasso with conviction, with Rothko it was reverse.

Three "Untitled" paintings from 1940-1941 show Rothko's absorption of Picasso – the Picasso of *Guernica*, with heads and body parts stacked in blocks and given a vaguely mythological look – but it was Miró who provided the strongest inspiration. Rothko wasn't ashamed to borrow from him directly in pictures such as *Hierarchal Birds* and most tellingly in *Tentacles of Memory*, a series of spidery black lines linking scratchy patches of red and blue, set against a background of grey-brown horizontal bands.

Let's be clear about it, Rothko had long since ceased to be a student; he was 42 when he painted *Tentacles of Memory* – too old to be plagiarising so shamelessly, yet it was through these Miróesque paintings that he found a way forward. Common to all are background bands of colour and tone – horizontal divisions which clearly anticipate the forms of his classic style, waiting for the elimination of the loosely figurative shapes and swirls.

The rooms in Paris are organised chronologically to show a definite progression through these early works to the moment in 1947 when he abandoned the figure completely with the first of the pictures known as "Multiforms" – luminous fields of colour broken by floating shapes and soft-edged blocks. They are painted like watercolours, wet on wet, with thin layers



"Untitled", 1953: in Rothko's work, combinations which ought not to work become a kind of visual perfection

National Gallery of Art, Washington

of colour bleeding at the edges. Gradually, the floating blocks became more ordered, stacked one on another in vertical piles and simplified until the pictures found the form that became Rothko's signature.

Ironically, the simpler the pictures became, the more complex their effect. They seem simultaneously empty and full: they draw the eye in and radiate light and colour out. These are the contradic-

tions at the heart of Rothko's paintings which provide such enduring mystery. On a basic level, the colours are breathtakingly beautiful and frequently surprising. Combinations which ought not work become a kind of visual perfection, yet, perversely, Rothko used to deny the importance of colour in his work. He preferred the illusion that the paintings were about something deeper and spoke

weightily about the painter's search for clarity: "the elimination of all obstacles between the painter and the idea, and between the idea and the observer". This is all very well, but it ignores the unavoidable truth that for the spectator – if not for the maker – colour is the language that they speak and which determines their response.

Rothko knew this, of course, but he also

knew that no two people will respond to a given colour or colour combination in quite the same way. Certain groupings can be relied upon – red tends to passion, blue and brown to melancholy – but the final mood belongs to the individual, not to the picture. That said, the artist had something very specific in mind for each of these pictures, defined by the arrangement of colour and shape, frequently with the weight

of the picture bearing down from above.

I'm not sure if there are degrees of success among these images: the forms hardly change from one to the next, though some move me more than others. Many of the most striking are those that seem tied to the natural world, a world of horizons and sunsets: an electric line of orange hanging land and sky in *Untitled* 1953 or a Turner-esque vortex of stored light in *Untitled* (Yellow, Pink, Yellow on Light Pink) 1953.

The comparison to Turner isn't as wild as it might seem. "Pictures of nothing add very little," was William Hazlitt's criticism of Turner's late depictions of light and mist and it's as good a description of Rothko as I can think of. At the opening of the New York Museum of Modern Arts Turner show in 1966 Rothko was heard to joke "that chap Turner learned a lot from me" and it was no accident that the Tate Gallery became the recipient of Rothko's Seagram murals in 1969, such was Rothko's pleasure in the idea of sharing a roof with Turner.

The murals were initially intended for, and commissioned by, the Four Seasons restaurant in New York's Seagram building, but, having eaten there one evening, Rothko changed his mind. Undeterred, he was increasingly drawn to working in series and to the idea that his paintings be grouped and seen together in a single room. The 18 works that he painted for a chapel in Houston between 1964 and 1967 (better a chapel than a restaurant) are probably his greatest single achievement.

The Houston pictures aren't represented in the Paris show, yet the point is made that Rothko's palette darkened as the 1950s progressed, as rust purples turn to black in the Seagram Murals and blues to black in Houston. The progression from the yellows and oranges of the early decade to the total darkness of black on black, as it is presented here, seems inevitable.

Great claims have been made for Rothko's last series of paintings, the black-on-grey canvases painted in the spring of 1969 – seen by many as the last word of a tragic nihilist and the works which conclude this exhibition. They were intended as finished works (he held a party for the paintings to gauge the opinion of his peers), but I'm not so sure. They have none of his trademark finesse or necessary depth: the brushstrokes seem clumsy and the spatial arrangement unresolved. They are dark, certainly, but they have none of the intensity of the inky-black paintings made five years earlier.

Rothko's career was peppered with bouts of depression and inactivity – he was never, by all accounts, a very cheery person – yet even with all this blackness and the knowledge of his suicide in 1970, the final atmosphere of the Paris show is far from depressing. The overriding sense is contemplative and slightly sad, but it is a delicious sort of sadness.

Much has been made over the years of the so-called "spiritual" quality of Rothko's pictures and of their kinship to "religious experience". I'm not too keen on this sort of talk as such phrases rarely actually mean anything, but a roomful of Rothkos has an undeniably meditative mood. His paintings have an enveloping quality, each one like a world in itself, and to be surrounded by them prompts an unspecific ache of longing for something not quite grasped. The work demands participation: even now a lot of people claim to miss the point, but, in a sense, what you get from Rothko's work depends entirely on what you bring to it.

Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 11 avenue du Président Wilson, Paris. Until 18 April

ROBERT HANKS ON TV

'Births, Marriages and Deaths' was ultimately redeemed by its final scene: a barking mix of Sophocles and 'Macbeth'

PAGE 18

Portraits by Ingres



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NATIONAL GALLERY

How to grow old rebelliously

Jean Dubuffet was teasing, shocking and painting with reckless abandon into his eighties. By Michael Glover

IT HAS often been said that adults, in learning the inhibitions thought proper to maturity, quickly shed the joyous and reckless spontaneities of childhood. To find a painter who gives the lie to this old adage, a man who was painting with the reckless abandon of a child at the age of 84, you need to visit the Waddington Galleries on Cork Street, where a dozen late paintings by Jean Dubuffet, all executed after he reached the age of 80, are on show.

The French painter, sculptor and engraver Jean Dubuffet was among the most richly paradoxical and iconoclastic artistic spirits of the century. Born into a prosperous family of Le Havre wine merchants in 1894, he developed a passion for painting early on – his earliest canvases show the influences of Cézanne, Masson, Suzanne Valadon and others – but by the 1940s, he saw it as his mission to turn his back on everything that might be regarded as his own cultural inheritance, and to create a language of signs entirely his own. This language overturned almost every known rule about perspective, representation and figuration. His would-be a language which would shock, puzzle, tease, dis-

concert and rebel with as much scratchy discordance as his hand and brain could muster between them. The great master of art brut was born.

His art passed through many phases, each of which has been documented with painstakingly passionate accuracy at the Fondation Dubuffet in Paris (located in an elegant, Second Empire mansion on the Left Bank, at 137, rue de Sévres; open to the general public on most days). Dubuffet worked with almost anything, and on almost any material that happened to come to hand: oils on canvas, oils on paper, acrylic on paper or canvas, with watercolour, pen, ink, on bits of cardboard, on newspaper, or on scraps of paper torn from some school exercise book; in notebooks.

No scrap of paper, no unembellished surface, was safe from his rapacious, frenzied fingers. He made paintings with sand rubbed into their surfaces. He made tumultuous and noisily crowded paintings, all cut up and mounted in great cycles of collage – such as a wonderful series called *Theatre of Memory* (1975-1979). A little earlier, during the 1960s, Dubuffet



'Site avec 5 Personages', 1981: Dubuffet was a great intellectual systematiser

discovered the wonders of polystyrene, how it could be cut, shaped and decorated at great speed – he was always known for his speed of execution. How blocky and monumental it seemed to be when first encountered by the eye! And yet how marvellously light and speedily workable in actuality! So like – and so unlike – stone.

The shaping of polystyrene led directly to the creation of cycles of monumental sculptures, which can now be seen in public spaces around the world. But by the end of the 1970s, and in part due to ill health and back problems, he had returned to painting and drawing, and was working on a much smaller scale altogether. Dubuffet, being a Frenchman, was a great intellectual systematiser, and he tended to create works in series, each

with its own resonantly suggestive name. The small-scale canvases on display at Waddington belong to three late series of acrylics, often painted on paper and mounted on canvas, called *Mires*, *Sites Aléatoires* and *Non-Lieux*. Where – or what exactly – are these "non-places" to which Dubuffet makes allusion in some of these frenzied and vibrant late paintings? His own

gnomic note to the series makes a reference to what he calls the usual intellectual opposition between existence and the idea of nothingness, and goes on to remind us that this notion of nothingness corresponds to zero in mathematics, which is, of course, a median point between negative and positive numbers.

The mechanisms of the universe itself, he argues, might also be said to consist of negative forces, which are in perpetual combat with their positive counterparts. "And I for one would be quite ready to believe," he concludes, "that the distinction we make between positive and negative is entirely illusory..." Hmmm.

An illusory gout of smoke rises into the air at this point – he was a heavy smoker all his life – and we nod our heads sagely at these mature-sounding, intellectualising words, wondering whether he has half-explained everything or wholly explained nothing. Meanwhile, the frenzied, bald old child scribbles exuberantly on, cocking his cultural snooks, and delighting everyone.

Waddington Galleries, 11 & 12 Cork Street, London W1, Mon-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 10-1 until 1 April

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MEDIA

The secret of winning press influence is to appeal to the personal interests of key reporters and columnists. By Charlie Whelan

How to woo the Tory press

When the Chancellor was briefing Sunday newspaper journalists after his Budget last week, one divorced reporter in the higher tax band spent the session concentrating on how his own tax position would be affected and why it was a big story. He even tried to rope in the other backs who were present.

The Treasury spiked his guns by leaking a line on the ending of tax relief for maintenance payments to the Saturday papers, but it illustrated how the press's political coverage can be subservient to the opinions – and the bank accounts – of individual journalists.

The journalist in question was from a Labour-supporting paper, which shows how much more fluid relations between the press and the Government have become. The

Lobby hacks worked out their tax position and were determined we shouldn't win

world is more complex than it once was, thanks to New Labour's efforts with titles and specific journalists.

Legend has it that the Labour Party lost the 1992 general election because of John Smith's shadow Budget. I well remember the day of the launch, and the general belief that it was a total triumph, which was how most papers reported it at first.

Us spin-doctors proudly went round telling everyone that eight out of 10 people would be better off. But this did not include the political journalists and commentators, all of whom would be worse off. And so, the myth goes, after John Smith's announcement, the lobby hacks sat down and worked out their own tax position should Labour win, and from that day on, they were determined that we wouldn't.

New Labour realised it was vitally important to win over the so-called Tory press, or at least neutralise some of their wildest excesses.

It was obvious to anyone that the country's biggest-selling paper, *The Sun*, would be the first target. Who will forget the headline "Labour's Dirty Dozen", a crude communist smear by political reporter Tony



Full spin ahead: Alastair Campbell briefs Charles Reiss, political editor of the 'Evening Standard'

John Voss

Some trade union leaders had recognised the importance of *The Sun* years ago. They knew that it was what their members read.

So Bill Jordan, of the engineering union, was writing for that paper when my friend Alastair Campbell was still writing pornography for *Forum*. Despite a rear-guard action by some of the journalists, including the political editor, *The Sun* came out for Tony Blair, but significantly not for New Labour.

There was as much likelihood that the *Daily Mail* would support Labour as there is of Jack Cunningham cycling to work. Who will forget the headline "Labour's Dirty Dozen", a crude communist smear by political reporter Tony

Bevin – now a fully paid-up member of the Alastair Campbell fan club. Like *The Sun*, the *Mail* had lost faith in the Tories, and while it would never support Labour, they were not in the mood to do much damage.

Before the election, I met the top *Mail* team, including the late Lord Rothermere, with Gordon Brown and his adviser, Ed Balls, to persuade them of our case. The main area of concern to Lord Rothermere was not what Labour may do to the economy, or our plans for trade union legislation, but what we were going to do about pets' passports.

He had a dog and the quarantine laws meant he could not easily take it with him on holiday. Gordon and I were flummoxed, we had no idea

what our policy was. Fortunately, Ed, whose parents live in Italy and have a dog, did. He told Lord Rothermere that dog passports were a priority for New Labour. I'm convinced that that spin helped in preventing the *Mail* from doing its worst.

The other Tory supporting paper is of course *The Telegraph*. Not much hope of them doing other than giving full support to the Tories. But even here you can make inroads. When we wanted to announce our tough new regime for the New Deal, whereby benefit would be lost if an offer of a job was not taken up, it was *The Daily Telegraph* that we turned. In fact, they gave it more support than the Shadow Cabinet.

Looking at the coverage that the

Budget got last week, you can tell that both the *Mail* and *The Daily Telegraph* have now fully reverted to type. If Gordon Brown had abolished income tax altogether, they would have attacked the Budget for not doing enough for marriage.

But it remains true that the policies of a paper are important when decisions are taken as to who should get given which story. The sensible targeting of different messages for different titles can result in all the papers supporting the same policy from different perspectives – the New Deal being a classic case.

But as I've shown, individuals can also be a great influence, not only newspaper owners, but also their employees.

When the Treasury first launched the new individual savings accounts – the ISA – which were designed to help the lower-paid to save, it had not bargained on how much money some political editors had invested in the Tesses and PEPs which were to be abolished.

The Evening Standard was the first to condemn the ISA, quickly followed by *The Sun*. It was particularly annoying that *The Sun* should take such a view as it was *Sun* readers who would benefit most, a point I made vigorously to the then *Sun* editor Stuart Higgins. There was no doubt in my mind that someone's personal financial circumstances were being treated as more important than the politics of the paper.

But when trying to influence a political journalist, most time is spent winning and dining the political columnist rather than the political editor of a paper, because it produces a double benefit. If you influence the columnist, you are also influencing the broadcasters – who pay a lot more attention to columnists than to the spin put on news stories.

Each paper has their top man, for they are nearly all men. The *Financial Times* has Philip Stevens, who sometimes seemed to know more about what is going on in the Treasury than I did. It was his columns that forced the pace in Government on the Euro. Andy Marr now writes for both the *New Labour Express* and *The Observer*, and still manages to keep Tony Blair on his toes. Many people have missed *The Independent's* Don Macintyre while he has been off writing his biography of Peter Mandelson.

Over at *The Times*, Peter Riddell

'The Daily Telegraph' gave the New Deal more support than the Shadow Cabinet did

seems to write more than most, but he does at least understand economics, which is more than one could say for Peter Hitchens at *The Express*. In fact, there are few good right-wing scribes around at the moment but Peter Osborne is an exception, and I'm not saying that because he is taking me to Cheltenham races this week. The list would not be complete without Paul Routledge, known as Rantledge down at *The Mirror*, where Piers Morgan and his political team have changed the fortunes of the paper.

For years, with a few honourable exceptions, the Fleet Street papers were known in Labour circles as the "Tory press". This is no longer the case because, just like politics itself, things are not black and white anymore. This new complex world means that the politics of a paper, and perhaps more importantly those of its writers, are more keenly monitored by the politicians than ever.

The writer was press secretary to Gordon Brown from 1993 to January 1999. His radio show, *'Sunday Service'*, begins on 4 April on Radio 5 Live

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Newspapers question the power of television

ANALYSIS

PAUL MCCANN

IN 1998 national newspaper groups ploughed £73m into television advertising, but it might be time to ask how much is a TV advertisement worth to a newspaper?

This newspaper has just begun a substantial television advertising campaign. *The Independent* has plenty to shout about: new sections, a cluster of awards and a year-on-year increase in sales for the first time in three years.

But many newspaper executives are now asking whether television advertising is the most cost effective way of improving sales.

A number of factors conspire to make newspapers, both broadsheet and tabloid, among the most expensive products to put on air. The first thing is the short-term nature of most newspaper advertising campaigns. TV companies have advance booking, or AB, deadlines around six weeks ahead of transmission date. After this date you pay a premium to get on air, and the closer your required broadcast date the bigger the premium.

Because most newspapers run advertising to support individual promotions – giveaway tickets, holidays, books for schools or whatever – they will not often know what those promotions are to be until the last moment. Some weeks, the media buyers for a newspaper group will not be instructed to enter the airtime trading market until a week or even a few days before they want the ad to air. This explains the increasing use of newspapers are making of radio, because ads there can

be turned around very quickly. More than once TV ads have been made from scratch at lunchtime on a Friday and broadcast that same night.

The other addition to a paper's TV advertising costs is the Friday-night squeeze. The prevailing wisdom is that readers have little time to read and make use of promotions in the week. On Saturdays and Sundays there are bigger papers, and more leisure time in which to read them. But that means newspapers all piling on to C4, ITV and to a lesser extent C5, trying to buy around programmes watched by a young, metropolitan audience. They don't want to share an ad break with the others and so they pay through the nose for their place

in the schedules. The premium newspapers pay to get on TV, compared with other types of goods, can be more than 50 per cent – in other words they get 50 per cent less advertising for their money. Only cars during the summer car-buying times, and alcohol brands around football matches, have to stump up so much extra to get on air.

And where does this get newspapers? It is very difficult to measure the effect of long-term, brand-building advertising campaigns. They change perceptions in cinemas, on radio and on posters, over periods that take years. But the immediate boost from a quick promotional ad campaign is fairly easy to quantify.

Last month *The Sunday*

Times, which spent £4.7m on TV last year, helped boost its average sales figure when it advertised a millennium part-work offer on TV. This would have raised sales by around 20,000 at a cost of £200,000 over the weekend. *The Observer*, which advertised heavily in January, eased off its spending to just one weekend and saw its sales average fall by 13,000 month on month. The weekend it did advertise, its sales would have been closer to 430,000 than the 406,000 they came in at. Last year *The Observer* spent £1.1m on TV advertising – a quarter of *The Sunday Times*' budget.

In the tabloid market, TV advertising seems to pull in a bigger sales than for broadsheets. The tabloids can get a 100,000 lift from a really good promotion, and spending £300,000 over a weekend is not unusual. Associated Newspapers is the biggest spender and last year put a whopping £18.8m on air just for its *Mail* titles. A recent BA half-price offer would have cost around £400,000 in airtime, but it had promotion to kens in the Saturday *Daily Mail*, the *Mail on Sunday* and Monday's *London Evening Standard*.

But what happens in both the broadsheet and tabloid markets is that heavy promotional advertising fails to retain readers. Perhaps cumulatively the *Mail* titles have benefited from almost non-stop promotional advertising, but for most newspapers, readers come to expect giveaway offers every day. And newspapers need them too.

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION				
Daily newspapers	January 1999	February 1999	% change	1998 TV spend £m
<i>The Mirror</i>	2,289,373	2,301,499	+0.53	3.84
<i>Daily Star</i>	539,991	534,704	-0.98	0.66
<i>The Sun</i>	3,722,416	3,698,805	-0.63	8.13
<i>The Express</i>	1,103,813	1,091,790	-1.09	5.70
<i>Daily Mail</i>	2,342,694	2,346,502	+0.16	11.73
<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	1,040,140	1,043,653	+0.34	3.76
<i>Guardian</i>	399,152	400,600	+0.36	1.77
<i>Independent</i>	219,549	220,203	+0.30	0.34
<i>Times</i>	746,317	755,359	+1.21	8.81
Sunday newspapers				
<i>News of the World</i>	4,314,352	4,296,654	-0.41	6.93
<i>Sunday Mirror</i>	2,048,902	1,985,075	-3.12	3.46
<i>Sunday People</i>	1,734,594	1,682,060	-3.03	0
<i>Mail on Sunday</i>	2,291,247	2,326,195	+1.53	7.67
<i>Express on Sunday</i>	1,009,683	1,010,122	+0.04	0.01
<i>Independent on Sunday</i>	252,587	252,105	-0.19	0
<i>Observer</i>	419,876	406,937	-3.08	1.12
<i>Sunday Telegraph</i>	810,587	816,978	+0.79	0.88
<i>Sunday Times</i>	1,371,869	1,377,297	+0.40	4.76

Source: NCA/PAAS

TV news has to play a generation game

Now that there are so many sources of news, is network TV strictly for old-timers? By Gavin Esler

LISTENING TO the Labour MP Gerald Kaufman and the former BBC chairman Marmaduke Hussey criticise BBC News 24 over recent weeks made me think back to the revelation of watching TV news in the United States. From the moment I moved to Washington, in the late 1980s, I realised there was something strange about the main evening news battleground on the big three networks, ABC, NBC and CBS, but I couldn't quite work out what it was.

Was it the fact that on ABC's *World News Tonight* the "world" outside North America rarely got a look in? Partly. Was it that, out of every 30-minute news show, there was only eight minutes of news because the rest was commercials or promotions? Yes, but there was something more.

It was the commercials themselves. They all seemed aimed at older people. There were the Centrum Silver adverts for a diet supplement for the over-50s ("It's Great to be Silver"). Then there were the

haemorrhoid ads and ads for laxatives or incontinence pads. Over on the rock music station MTV, in contrast, were ads for tampons and Coca-Cola.

If you start thinking about US television less in terms of programme content and more as an advertising delivery system, you recognise that American network TV news has a special appeal for the post-menopausal, incontinent, constipated and sick.

"Network news is for geezers," one of my American TV news colleagues explained with refreshing candour, meaning it is for older people. The biggest story in the American media for the past decade has been precisely this problem. How do you pursue the chimera of the younger news-viewer or newspaper reader without alienating that increasing proportion of the audience which

is ageing? Should you? If you don't, won't your viewers and readers eventually die off?

A couple of years ago *Time* magazine reported that the percentage of American adults reading a daily paper had fallen from 78 per cent in 1970 to 64 per cent in 1995. In 1981 the big three TV networks, ABC, CBS, and NBC could boast that every night, 41 per cent of all American homes tuned in to their evening news shows. By 1995 that was down to 26 per cent. What has changed? Well, three changes all point to increased competition. First, 24-hour TV news networks, CNN, MSNBC and FOX, are increasingly competitive and at moments of crisis, like the Lewinsky scandal, pile on viewers from modest bases. Second, the Internet has transformed how many of us get access to information. And third,

talk radio has become the most popular radio format in the US, surpassing rock or country and western.

Bill Adams, professor of public administration at George Washington University, and editor of a news sheet called *Talk Daily*, puts it this way: "Roughly one out of every five or six Americans listens to talk radio every 24 hours. It has a big audience. More people listen to Rush Limbaugh than read *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The LA Times* and *Chicago Tribune* put together and doubled."

Now of course, Britain is different... except where it is the same. The BBC's Radio 5 Live was derided at the time of its launch for combining news and sport in an accessible way. It is now Sony Radio Station of the Year. BBC Online has become a

favourite Internet site. And News 24 has grown from nothing 15 months ago to a news source seen by more than five million viewers a week. If it had been launched in the private sector by a Ted Turner or Rupert Murdoch, there would be ads trumpeting it as the "fastest growing TV news network in Britain".

Trying to make three state-of-the-art computer systems drive News 24 has produced some uncomfortable results. My personal favourite was the night I read that Boris Yeltsin had been admitted to hospital, and our computer system decided to run pictures of the BSE crisis. I am talking about Boris Yeltsin. You are seeing a butcher chopping up a sheep's carcass. While such cock-ups have become less frequent, the BBC could have taken the strategic decision to forget about all of it

no Radio 5, no News 24, no Online - and to do what the BBC has always done. But if you do what you have always done, you don't always get what you always got.

In a society where we now work, shop and play 24 hours a day, only those who think that network news is for geezers want to be told when they can watch it on TV. Even the stodgiest BBC manager has seen the figures pointing to a slow death. They show that houses with cable and satellite services in Britain watch far less BBC news than those of us stuck with the five terrestrial channels. The prospect for the BBC would be to become, to put it in a brutally against way, your grandad's news, fine for a while, but eventually driven to spending American TV as a superb service for the infirm, but with little to offer younger viewers.

I am a fan of Sky and CNN, partly because the leadership of Rupert Murdoch and Ted Turner spotted all this long ago. But now Britain has a choice. We can go the Kaufman or Hussey route, which means that as a nation we accept that only American-owned 24-hour news stations will work, because we have become so third-rate we cannot afford a British alternative. Maybe, like our car industry and half the supposedly "British" national newspapers published in London, we no longer care whether TV news channels are foreign-owned. Personally, I do care. The risk is not that we cannot do it but that we will not find it sufficiently to make it truly competitive. Britain can and does compete as a world player in TV news. We can produce news for your grandchildren as well as your grandparents. Just watch us.

Gavin Esler is a presenter on BBC News 24 and author of *The United States of Anger*

Staggeringly masculine

The *New Statesman* may have gone soft under New Labour, but it's still a male clique. By Natasha Walter

It's a sleepy Friday afternoon in the sleepy office of the *New Statesman*. Beige blinds are closed against the murky London light, and dotted around the large room are a dozen or so people, sometimes murmuring into a telephone, sometimes breaking into subdued laughter. Michael McGuinness, the illustrator, in a hairy blue sweater, pauses and dips his brush in red ink, pauses and dips, pauses and dips. "It's a quiet place to work," he says softly, "after being at newspapers." All the men I meet - and today the editors here are all men, since I have arrived during a week when the deputy editor, Cristina Odone, is on holiday - are pretty mellow. David Gibbons, the art editor, formerly of *The Sunday Telegraph* and *The Sunday Express*, wearing a neat little beard and dark maroon shirt, says: "It's the only place I've ever worked with such a good atmosphere."

You'd never think, from talking to the *Statesman's* staff, that the heat is on. It feels like a charmed little backwater in the stormy weather of London journalism. Yet a storm of sorts has been raging here. It began when a potential buyer, the millionaire novelist Robert Harris, announced that he wanted to resurrect its starry past. "The collapse of the *New Statesman* has been a minor intellectual and journalistic tragedy for this country," he wrote in *The Sunday Times* last December. Anger was heard wherever left-wing journalists gathered; how could Harris write the publicly what they had all been saying privately for years?

At the time, the *Statesman's* owner, Geoffrey Robinson, was the Government's Paymaster General, and unable to take much active interest in the magazine. But since the Christmas scandal over his loan to Mandelson, Robinson is out of the Government and able to take a more hands-on role as proprietor. Robert Harris's bid to save the *New Statesman* from itself has thus met with polite refusal. Yet the magazine's circulation is just over 20,000, and it is said to lose around £10,000

a week. *The Spectator*, in contrast, has a circulation of 56,000. In other words, Harris had a point.

The *Statesman's* editor, Peter Wilby, seems unperturbed. We have lunch in a cosy Italian restaurant in Wilton Street, the sort that figures in Amis novels - that's Kingsley not Martin - and over his tagliatelle and his glass of house white Wilby sets out his comfortable view of what the magazine should be doing. "It should be a relaxing weekend read," he says. "The sort of magazine you can enjoy over a cup of coffee."

Peter Wilby's fans see that softened touch as a refreshing contrast to his predecessor, Ian Hargreaves. When the magazine appointed Hargreaves, co-editor of *The Independent*, as editor in 1996, the *Statesman* was revolutionised and identified itself solidly with the

emerging New Labour government. The columnist Suzanne Moore remembers going to a party for the *New Statesman* just after Hargreaves took over: "The parties in the past had always been full of men in suits. So the magazine reflected and magnified the change in the fortunes of the left, moving swiftly from a Seventies fringe meeting to a Nineties cabinet meeting."

What Hargreaves did with the magazine exactly paralleled what Blair did with his party, says one member of staff. "And he was loved and hated for it, just like Blair." But the limitations of Hargreaves' vision were clear; the magazine's culture may have moved from men in beards to men in suits, but that still

left a lot of people out.

The challenge facing Peter Wilby is to push the magazine into a wider arena. There is certainly a lot of good feeling around Wilby, the ex-editor of *The Independent* on *Sunday*. But he has been editing the magazine for nearly a year; he is going to make it or break it? He is certainly offering articles that take a wider view on British culture than our taxation policy (take two recent features - Will Self on how British society is too nice, or the columnist Andrew Marr on how it is too spiteful), and a beaked-up back half, where you can find decent arts and books coverage.

There is still a cloud of nostalgia for those early days hanging over the *Statesman*. When Robert Harris thought of taking it over, he was thinking not just of its future. "The key thing was, I wanted to get back to something that had existed in the past," he told me.

Nobody should underestimate the feeling that lefty backs have for the good old days of the *New Statesman*, whether they are looking right back to its first, golden years, when Sidney and Beatrice Webb went for walks along Beachy Head with their friends to talk about launching a new magazine, and Bertrand Russell and Maynard Keynes and George Bernard Shaw played out their arguments there, or whether we are talking about the shiny Seventies, when Anthony Howard got the young James Fenton and Christopher Hitchens, Martin Amis and Julian Barnes to fill its pages.

If you need evidence that the magazine is attached to its past, catch the fact that the server on which the magazine is produced is called the K-drive, after the magazine's second editor, Kingsley Martin, so that the writers can still "send copy to Kingsley". The *New Statesman's* past history as a club for clever men has always been vividly present to me: my great-grandfather, the maverick liberal journalist SK Ralcliffe put the new into *New Statesman*, telling Beatrice and Sidney Webb way back in 1913 that "The *Statesman*" alone was a bad name. With that family history I am keenly aware that if I'm to

buy the magazine, I don't actually want it to be something that my forefathers would have bought, but something different.

But Wilby hasn't quite managed to deliver something that feels fresh. The peculiar failing of the magazine - its inability to read like something that was written today rather than last month or last year or 10 years ago - is epitomised in its irredeemably masculine flavour. There are honourable exceptions, including columnist Suzanne Moore. But three weeks ago, of 23 bylined articles on the contents page, a pathetic three were by women. Parity, that maddening absence of women is a result of where the magazine is situated - within Labour Party politics. At the last Labour Party conference the *Statesman* threw the young men in suits talked to you with their gaze constantly roaming past your shoulder. In case Tony or Gordon or Peter walked through the door. The magazine opens every week with its spoof MP's column, full of in-jokes about New Labour, and proceeds via Steve Richards' inside-track political column and Paul Routledge's gossip about who's in and who's out

in Westminster, to a procession of articles that dissect ministers' every move. The magazine has a frankly incestuous relationship with the party top-brass. Magazine staff kept saying things to me that made the lot of them sound like sulky schoolboys. "Whelan wouldn't speak to me for weeks," they said. "Peter wouldn't speak to Ian for months..." "Tony got terribly angry with John, about an article John wrote about how nobody liked Tony."

It is an open secret that around the time of Ian Hargreaves' departure from the magazine, the first potential editor to be approached was Jonathan Freedland, a columnist on *The Guardian* who is happy to network in New Labour circles. Freedland was sounded out by Geoffrey Robinson together with Charlie Whelan and Ed Balls, during a series of very private meetings. In the end, he decided not to go for the editorship - but the discussions were being held right in the heart of the New Labour club.

And that little clique is famously exclusive. One female journalist who would have been a real runner for the editorship after Hargreaves' departure, told me frankly why she

decided not to go for it. "If it had meant spending half my evenings with Clare Short and Mo Mowlam, that would have been one thing. But I knew perfectly well that it would have meant spending all my time with people like Charlie Whelan and Ed Balls, those ferociously self-important, opinionated men with a sense of humour bypass, and I just looked at that sort of life with dread and horror. I thought, if you can't hack it, don't do it. So I didn't."

The second time I visit the magazine, I am glad to see the deputy editor, Cristina Odone, in action. A throaty-voiced Italian-American, Odone previously edited *The Catholic Herald*. Now she throws herself around that subdued office in a rush, running into Peter's office, honeying and babbling all the staff, whispering on the telephone, promising copy every moment.

Despite her great social charm, which can be seen as fluffiness, Odone has serious intentions. She wants the magazine to become more of a platform for women writers and women's issues. Eighty per cent of the readers are men, and she wants that to change. "There are two voices that you didn't see in the magazine in the past," she says, "that of youth and that of womanhood. This isn't just a problem of the left - it's a problem of an industry, journalism, that has ghettoised women's issues. I'm talking about trying to make the difference between a macho magazine that just does politics with a capital P, and one that takes on board everything else and sees that women are not to be excluded."

Interestingly, when I ask Peter Wilby what pieces he has been proud to publish, the very first article he mentions is one that Helen Wilkinson wrote last autumn, about how Labour politics has become a club for masculine control freaks. Wilkinson is a co-founder of *Demos* and her piece focused on a swell of anger among women who felt betrayed by the feminine window-dressing on an essentially masculine pursuit of power. She argued for a politics in which "the boys at the heart of New Labour" could learn to surrender some of their power.

She is right. And it's only if the *New Statesman* attempts to break down the cosy, masculine coterie that keeps a stranglehold on political debate that it will appeal again to a large audience.



NS editor Peter Wilby: 'It should be a relaxing, weekend read... the sort of magazine you enjoy over coffee' Andrew Buurman

The Sun rises in the east - and sets off a price war

A racy new mass-market newspaper is about to hit Hong Kong. Many fear the worst. By Stephen Vines

DOES ANY of the following sound familiar? A racy new mass-market newspaper will be brash, hot on human interest stories, strong on sports coverage and carry lots of entertainment news. And another thing, it will be called *The Sun*.

The new *Sun*, however, is far removed from Britain: it is to be launched in Hong Kong this Thursday. Like its namesake, though, it belongs to an aggressive publishing company which is prepared to launch a price war to secure its place in the market.

The Hong Kong publisher of *The Sun* is the Oriental Press Group, which is euphemistically described as being either "colourful" or "controversial". It already owns Hong Kong's best selling newspaper, *The*

Oriental Daily News, and a clutch of other high selling titles.

It is now heading in an even more downmarket direction, hoping to attract younger readers and, according to its pre-launch marketing material, take readers away from its bitter rival, the revolutionary *Apple Daily* newspaper.

The rivalry between the Oriental group and the Next Media Group, which owns *Apple*, sparked a vicious price war two years ago which ended with five closures in Hong Kong's newspaper world.

The Sun will be launched with a

cover price of HK\$2 (about 18p), while the competition sells at HK\$5. The third ranking *Sing Pao Daily* has already launched a pre-emptive strike by promising to sell at HK\$3 while the *Apple Daily* has made it clear that it will not sit idly by in a price war.

While the battle lines are being drawn on the price front, there is considerable speculation over how the fight will be pursued at the editorial level, where there are fears of greater sensationalism.

Last week all the popular papers ran big stories about a rumoured suicide attempt by Leon Lai, a heart-throb big league pop star, who had to hold a press conference to prove he was not dead or self-mutilated.

Some in the newspaper industry fear that *The Sun* will drag reporting down to new depths, but its publishers promise that it will be "self-disciplined" and stress "good taste" with an "avoidance of obscene, indecent and profane language".

Many of the reporters it has recruited are young and new to the industry. Their enthusiasm may take them in directions closer to those pursued by their British namesake.

This would mark a radical departure for popular journalism in Hong Kong, which is a bizarre mixture of extraordinarily racy reportage alongside serious political, economic financial and international news. Whereas British tabloids used to sell newspapers on the shoulders of unclad page three girls, their more prudish Hong Kong counterparts (which are all broadsheets) eschew naked flesh but are quite happy to show obscene scenes of the crime pictures depicting severed limbs and the like.

The Oriental Daily News made

its name from crime reporting and retains an enormous stable of reporters who cruise around Hong Kong in cars ready to rush to crime scenes, sometimes arriving before the police.

It may be thought that the paper's interest in crime is somewhat inappropriate considering that Ma Sik-chun, its principal founder, is a fugitive from justice living in Taiwan where he escaped after fleeing from Hong Kong's biggest ever drug trafficking conspiracy trial.

The Ma family are very well known in Hong Kong but only came

to the attention of the British public a year ago when they used the *Oriental Daily* to publicise a demand for the Conservative Party to return - a film donation made by the Ma: in June 1994 "in exchange for a personal matter". According to the Ma family, "this matter was not dealt with" and so they were publicly demanding the money back.

Rupert Murdoch, owner of *The Sun* in Britain, is also known to court politicians but seems to have done so without attracting the same kind of publicity as the Ma. Like them, however, he has proved himself brave entering tight newspaper markets and has been ruthless in eliminating the competition.

The similarities are compelling.

The similarities are compelling.

Doctoring the books

Media medic Vernon Coleman is best known for his views on sex, but what he really cares about is animal rights. By Naomi Marks

With his patterned bow tie, swept-back grey hair and quiet-spoken manner, Dr Vernon Coleman looks every inch the media scientist's media scientist.

Only he is not. Most, he claims, won't even debate publicly with him on TV, the radio or in print now. His trenchant views on scientists in the pay of big corporations, the evils of meat-eating and the on-again threat of AIDS to the straight community are too much for them, he says.

Not that he is bothered. His role, he insists, is to tell his millions of readers the truth. And as he has just shaken hands to renew the contract for his weekly column in *The People*, his future as king of the media docs is assured.

Coleman, 52, says he has written at least one column a week since he was 18. He is, however, medically qualified, and was a GP for 10 years. But he tired of NHS bureaucracy and his holistic beliefs clashed with the largely drug-driven Health Service. In any case, he says, he wrote a lot about the dangers of tranquillisers and found himself "getting into lots of trouble". So he packed it in.

He became TVam's first television doctor, then a *Daily Star* columnist, was poached by *The Sun*, and then moved to *The People* in 1993, where his

"Casebook" has found a home ever since. He did not try to avoid controversy, though.

"Populism not professionalism" might be his motto. For the uninitiated, "Dr Vernon's Casebook", his *People* column, is part tried-and-tested tabloid titillation, part anti-establishment crusade, a curious mix of right-onism and right-offism. A recent "Casebook" sported the headline "I get a naughty thrill giving guys an eye-ful", as well as the following on genetic engineering: "Arrogant, ignorant scientists, businessmen who think only of the bottom line and greedy, weak, stupid politicians are a far greater threat to life than Saddam Hussein."

From rows with the Advertising Standards Authority, to being inducted in the High Court, to being censured by the Press Complaints Commission, he seems to have courted it ever since.

His *People* column always leads on a sexy issue, but there is method behind this sex-madness, he insists. "The lead letter is nearly always about sex because that gives them a headline to write. The rest of the column is hardly ever about sex. It's a smokescreen. If I wrote a column which attacked drug companies, vivisection, governments for lying, or genetic engineering exclusively, no one would read it."

He says he writes for the tabloids because it gives him a mass audience of readers who "don't already have their minds

made up". Asked to describe his column, though, Coleman stumbles. "It's me," he says, before pausing, then adding: "I suppose I try and write in blood a lot of the time. I suppose a lot of it is violent in that if I get angry about something, I don't try to hide it." Then he points out that there is the straight medical advice which shouldn't be overlooked: "There's quite a lot of tinnitus and piles."

If he didn't have the column, Coleman says he would be reduced to standing in the street with a placard - which he would happily do. But he isn't just a canny campaigner with an interesting take on moral matters. He is a mini-marketing wonder.

Ten years ago, tired of meddling book editors, he set up his Devon-based self-publishing venture. It now has three imprints: European Medical Journal for his monthly health letter; Chiltern Designs for his fiction; and Blue Books for "everything we don't know where to put".

He has written scores of books, spends £500,000 a year advertising them, and claims self-publishing still makes a profit. Then there are his premium-rate phone lines, with titles such as "Oral sex - how to do it". At one stage, he put his name (now trademarked) to some 200 of these. All these ventures are freely peddled in his column: his contracts, he explains, have always specified that he is allowed to do this. The cross-



Vernon Coleman spends £500,000 a year marketing his books

Phil Meech

promotion of his works, he says, enables editors to get him cheaply - which, at "not far off" a reported £150,000 a year, isn't that cheap.

It also has a worthy rationale. For example, his advertised sexy phone lines subsidise less popular but more informative lines, such as those on endometriosis or vaccines. The phone lines, he says, don't bring in as much as people think.

The most important subsidies, however, go into his work as a campaigner against animal cruelty - about which he is

fanatical. He has just spent six months writing another book on animal rights, and his website - www.vernoncoleman.com - allows you to download much of his work on the subject.

His campaigning, he says, has upset many and led to death threats over the years. "It's difficult not to sound paranoid, but if you annoy a lot of large companies for a long period of time and cost them a lot of money, then eventually they get a bit upset." He admits that editors have asked him to tone it down in the past. "I shout

at them. They shout at me. I resign and stamp my feet. I'm terrible - probably the most difficult columnist in Britain to deal with."

He says there are three things in life worth doing: trying to change the world, trying to have fun and trying to make money. "If you can do all three things at the same time, then that's fantastic."

He adds: "Newspapers have vast amounts of money. It liberates them enormously if you help by taking it away. I'm a sort of Robin Hood type."

THE WORD ON THE STREET

TONY GALLAGHER, the *Daily Mail's* news editor, won't be the last hack to misunderstand the "send to everyone in the office so they can have a good laugh" option on his computer message system, but he is a lesson to us all. Last week the newsroom was as giddy as it ever gets at the *Mail*, after a grovelling memo from Gallagher to editor-in-chief Paul Dacre ended up in the news tray on everyone's computers. The memo apologised at length for missing a story about the death of an ex-model and, like a Chinese Communist self-criticism session, listed where he had failed his supreme leader. Punishment squads have been known to drag erring *Mail* journalists off screaming in the night to a place called "Metro", so Mr Gallagher is right to be worried.

THOSE OPPOSED TO Channel 4's *Queer as Folk* just get plain weirder. They are in a minority - of the 4,000 responses to the programme, 60 per cent have been favourable. But the 40 per cent against comprises people who shouldn't be allowed near sharp objects. The sublimely mad has to be one call from a double-barrelled name, the day after the first episode was shown: "My housekeeper is still so upset today she has had to go home." Clearly there is now so queer as anti-Queer folk.

Page three of *The Times* looks more like page three of *The Sun* every



week. And last week it went the whole hog and went for a topless celebrity shot. Admittedly, no newspaper could resist the Nicole Kidman/Tom Cruise trailer pictures from Stanley Kubrick's last picture, *Eyes Wide Shut*, but only the red-tops thought that showing the whole thing uncensored was newsworthy. Er, the red-tops and *The Times*, that is. The mid-market tabloids and all the other broadsheets eschewed the frame with nipples in it, but *The Thunderer* seemingly has different values these days.

THE *SUN's* verdict on the Lewis-Hollyfield fight was unequivocal: "Stitch-Up", screamed its front page yesterday, followed by two pages headlined "Crime of the Century" in the news pages, and five pages in the sports section. Its main piece on the "funny business" behind the fight result was written by boxing correspondent Colin Hart in New York.

Strange, then, that Hart himself had scored the fight as a draw in a result which *The Sun* relegated to the bottom corner of a sports page.

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Independent Newspapers plc is an expanding worldwide media and communications group with interests in newspaper and magazine publishing, electronic media and broadcast. Their UK arm includes the ownership of *The Independent* and *Independent on Sunday*.

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The company offers a highly competitive salary and an excellent benefits package including 25 days holiday, pension, private health insurance, free use of our on-site fitness centre and a subsidised staff restaurant.

Interested applicants should send a current CV with a covering letter to:

Brigitte Saxer, Head of Research,
Independent Newspapers, 17th Floor,
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Public Relations Company requires an Account Director to lead business development plans within the leisure sector. The successful candidate will require combined experience of running and managing accounts, public and trade sector media and PR experience, crisis management and knowledge of the leisure industry.

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SALES EXECUTIVES Full time Sales Executives required for expanding London lifestyle weekly publication. Applicants should be graduate level, motivated, with strong sales ability. Competitive salary and commission offered to the right applicants.

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We are now taking applications for our unique nine-week postgraduate course in magazine journalism, which takes place from July 9 to September 17 this year. If you're serious about wanting to become a journalist, this is the course you need. Approved by the Periodicals Training Council and the National Union of Journalists, the course is in its 11th year. It's reputation is unparalleled. Previous delegates have won national accolades, including Young Journalist of the Year, Consumer Journalist of the Year, Observer Young Travel Writer of the Year and runner-up in The Guardian Young Writer of the Year. We expect everyone we choose to secure a full-time job on a magazine. Last year, four people had jobs before the course ended. It is held in London and places are limited. (We take just 24 people). You will learn all aspects of magazine journalism from working journalists (not teachers or retired hacks). Run by PMA Training, Europe's largest editorial training group, the course includes work attachment on a national magazine. We are not looking for 24 English graduates. Your degree is less important than a determination to become a journalist. For an application form and detailed information pack, send an A4 SAE with a 26p stamp to the address below.

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To advertise in this section please call the Media Team on 0171 293 2301.

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Extensive client contact, administrative mind and computer literacy are a must. Candidate must have at least 4 years experience working in the industry and be educated to equivalent of degree level. Languages required are French, German, and Italian as well as English. Position would suit a Swiss National. Please reply in strict confidence to P.O. Box 1 3021, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5DL

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Your editorial experience, knowledge of snowboarding and outdoor sports, sense of humour and vision to keep our publications ahead of the competition and climb to new heights of originality and quality. Offices based around Europe. Salary c.£30k. Apply in the first instance, Clive Ripley, Ref: GU01, 237 Queensdown Road, Balfoursea, London SW8 3NP

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E-commerce business seeks manager with proven experience building a new venture from the ground up. Requires strong management background and significant editorial/publishing experience. Must have experience at building content, understand database publishing and be comfortable working in emerging European markets and US. The successful candidate must be competitive, entrepreneurial and willing to work long hours to help us become a winner in our field. Written applications only to: QXL, 334 Ledbury Grove, London W10 5AH

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TUESDAY RADIO

PICK OF THE DAY

IT'S A tawdry business, throwing the media spotlight on relatives of the famous, but it's got to be done and at least radio spares us the hideous glow of palpably reflected glory. In today's The Musical Side of the Family (1.30pm RA), the Rt Reverend Brian Hannon lifts the lid on his perplexed relationship with son Neil (right), the flamboyant frontman of the Divine Comedy.



DOMINIC CAVENTISH

minor, Op 51 No 2. Tchaikovsky: String Quartet No 2 in F, Op 22. 9.00 Postscript: An idiosyncratic history of classical duets and an incidental history of loving, told by dancers and thinkers. 2. 'The Modernist': Apollo meets his muse. 9.00 Nash Ensemble. Conductor Martyn Brabbins. Ian Brown (piano), Rosemary Hardy (soprano). Beethoven: Trio in B flat, Op 11. Berg, arr de Loeuwer: Seven Early Songs. Mehlert: Des knaben Wunderhorn. Strauss: Suite for 13 Wind Instruments, Op 4. 10.45 Night Waves. Architects, town planners and artists all applaud it, but how does public space improve the life of those who live in cities? Richard Coles examines the meaning, function and importance of our urban social spaces and explores their relationship with architecture. He also talks to Charles Jencks, whose new book, Ecstatic Architecture, explores a shift from functional to sensual concerns in modern buildings. Plus the secret history of the Anasazi people of America: 'Night Waves' reports on an anthropological debate that cuts to the heart of American identity. 11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Debussy. (R) 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night. RADIO 4 (92.4-94.8MHz FM) 6.00 Today. 9.00 NEWS; Unreliable Evidence.

6.00 The Cheltenham Festival. 4.30 Drive. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 The Tuesday Match. Russell Fuller presents coverage of the night's top football action, including the second leg of the UEFA Cup quarter-finals. 10.00 Late Night Live. The day's big stories with Nick Robinson. Including 10.30 a full sports roundup. 11.00 News and finance. And between 11.30 and 1.00 a sharp and spirited late-night topical discussion. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports. CLASSIC FM (100.0-101.9MHz FM) 6.00 Nick Bailey. 9.00 Michael Mappin. 12.00 Requests. 2.00 Concerto. 3.00 Jamie Cricht. 6.30 Newsnight. 7.00 Smooth Classics. At Seven. 9.00 Evening Concert. London Classical Players/Roger Norrington. Brahms: Tragic Overture. Variations on a Theme of Haydn. Beethoven: Symphony No 7 in A. Handel: Water Music Suite No 1 in F. 11.00 Alan Mann. 2.00 Concerto. 3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths. VIRGIN RADIO (1215, 1197-1200kHz MW 105.8MHz FM) 6.30 Chris Evans. 9.30 Russ Williams. 10.00 Mark Forster. 4.00 Harriet Scott. 6.45 London Calling with Harriet Scott/AM Pete and Geoff. 7.30 Pete and Geoff. 10.00 Gary Davies. 1.00 Richard Allen. 4.30 - 6.30 Phil Kennedy. WORLD SERVICE RADIO (198kHz LW) 1.00 The World Today. 1.30 On Screen. 1.45 Record News. 2.00 The World Today. 2.30 Mapping the World. 3.00 The World Today. 3.20 Sports Roundup. 3.30 World Business Report. 3.45 In-sight. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today (400-700). TALK RADIO 6.00 Big Boys Breakfast with David Banks & Nick Ferrer. 9.00 Scott Chisholm and Sally James. 12.00 Crime Fighters. 1.00 Anna Reuben - Live and Direct. 4.00 The Sportsman. 7.00 Frank's People. 8.00 Cheating Hearts with Jayne Irving. 10.00 James Whale. 1.00 - 6.00 Ian Collins.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

DIRECTOR PETER GREENAWAY has a rare talent for provoking strong reactions - Ken Russell is among those to have protested about his films. Typically, critics were divided about The Pillow Book (10.05pm FilmFour), an idiosyncratic film which bears out a comment the director once made that: "I'm not a filmmaker. I'm a painter in cinema." Proving he does not just go in for big box-office work such as the new Star Wars film, Ewan



JAMES RAMPTON

McGregor stars as a man who becomes embroiled with an alluring bisexual woman (Vivian Wu) who draws books on his body. Barnsley vs Tottenham (7.30pm Sky Sports 3) is the rescheduled sixth round FA cup tie which was originally called off due to bad weather. Tottenham fans will be hoping that French winger, David Ginola (right), continues his rich vein of form. JAMES RAMPTON

6.00 The Cheltenham Festival. 4.30 Drive. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 The Tuesday Match. Russell Fuller presents coverage of the night's top football action, including the second leg of the UEFA Cup quarter-finals. 10.00 Late Night Live. The day's big stories with Nick Robinson. Including 10.30 a full sports roundup. 11.00 News and finance. And between 11.30 and 1.00 a sharp and spirited late-night topical discussion. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports. CLASSIC FM (100.0-101.9MHz FM) 6.00 Nick Bailey. 9.00 Michael Mappin. 12.00 Requests. 2.00 Concerto. 3.00 Jamie Cricht. 6.30 Newsnight. 7.00 Smooth Classics. At Seven. 9.00 Evening Concert. London Classical Players/Roger Norrington. Brahms: Tragic Overture. Variations on a Theme of Haydn. Beethoven: Symphony No 7 in A. Handel: Water Music Suite No 1 in F. 11.00 Alan Mann. 2.00 Concerto. 3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths. VIRGIN RADIO (1215, 1197-1200kHz MW 105.8MHz FM) 6.30 Chris Evans. 9.30 Russ Williams. 10.00 Mark Forster. 4.00 Harriet Scott. 6.45 London Calling with Harriet Scott/AM Pete and Geoff. 7.30 Pete and Geoff. 10.00 Gary Davies. 1.00 Richard Allen. 4.30 - 6.30 Phil Kennedy. WORLD SERVICE RADIO (198kHz LW) 1.00 The World Today. 1.30 On Screen. 1.45 Record News. 2.00 The World Today. 2.30 Mapping the World. 3.00 The World Today. 3.20 Sports Roundup. 3.30 World Business Report. 3.45 In-sight. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today (400-700). TALK RADIO 6.00 Big Boys Breakfast with David Banks & Nick Ferrer. 9.00 Scott Chisholm and Sally James. 12.00 Crime Fighters. 1.00 Anna Reuben - Live and Direct. 4.00 The Sportsman. 7.00 Frank's People. 8.00 Cheating Hearts with Jayne Irving. 10.00 James Whale. 1.00 - 6.00 Ian Collins.

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

BBC1 N IRELAND As BBC1 London except: 9.30 Let's Talk (S2582). 10.30 Jai Jai (S2582). 10.30 Men Behaving Badly (S2582). 11.30 Football Milestones (S2582). 12.30 The Waterfront (S2582). 2.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 3.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 4.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 5.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 6.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 7.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 8.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 9.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 10.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 11.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 12.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 1.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 2.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 3.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 4.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 5.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 6.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 7.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 8.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 9.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 10.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 11.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 12.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 1.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 2.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 3.40 The Waterfront (S2582). 4.40 Johnnie Walker (S2582). 5.40 The Waterfront 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